

“ON THE COVER OF A *ROLLING STONE*”: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF GENDER  
REPRESENTATION IN POPULAR CULTURE BETWEEN 1967-2004

A Thesis by

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I have examined the final copy of this Thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts with a major in Communication

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## DEDICATION

To my family, thank you for giving me the courage to pursue my dreams.

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## ABSTRACT

Compared to the large body of research on female gender roles, little research has focused on male gender representation. This study addresses male and female gender representation as portrayed on the cover of *Rolling Stone* magazine. This research studies both male and female gender representation throughout the publication from 1967 to 2004. Using Erving Goffman's *gender displays* and Mee-Eun Kang's *body displays*, as a guideline from the underlining theme, the data shows that gender displays for females have remained fairly consistent, but body displays have increased. However, men's gender stereotypes increased when they were in the presence of a woman, and a woman's gender displays decreased when presented with a man. The findings also indicated a significant increase in body displays for female cover subjects but a significant decrease for males.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

My first experience with the power of magazine images was in high school. Jokingly, I asked two friends of mine what they were going to be for Halloween. The joke turned on me when one said he was going to be the hands that were holding up Janet Jackson's breast and my other friend mentioned that he was going to be the hotdog that was receiving a mustard bath from Jenny McCarthy. The boys laughed, elbowed each other for their successful puns, and walked to their next class. I stood there shocked by their comments, but amazed how these images became so prevalent in my friends' everyday vocabulary. I knew the exact magazine images they were referring to because boys in my school carried around issues of *Rolling Stone*, as if it were a right of passage when a boy becomes a man.

I have never had a subscription to *Rolling Stone*, nor have I purchased many of the issues. I pick up the magazine to quickly read about a band or upcoming artist every now and then. However, I will admit that I always look to see who is on the cover every two weeks. Some of the most memorable ones, including the ones already mentioned, are Cindy Crawford in bikini bottoms (one of their top-selling issues, RS 672/ 673), Justin Timberlake's shirtless 2003 cover announcing his breakup with Britney Spears and a nude Jennifer Anniston with her thong-tan outline. More recently, Kanye West created controversy with his image as a crucified Jesus.

*Rolling Stone* is the No. 1 magazine in the music industry and has had an impact on music culture. Not only has it been around for more than 40 years, it still resonates with its first generation of readers who have passed it down to their children (the current target audience for the publication). More than anything, *Rolling Stone* is known for its covers. Dr. Hook and the Medicine Show's song *Cover of the Rolling Stone* stated it best: "It's the thrill that'll get ya when

you get your picture on the cover of a *Rolling Stone*.” This publication is the benchmark of success for many artists, not only in the music industry, but also in the entertainment industry as a whole.

For several years, I have worked in the music industry and assisted in the planning for one of the largest music conferences in the country. The conference holds daytime panels with top industry leaders. The early evening includes a networking party, and at night one can choose from many different hosting every genre of music. During my first conference, I noticed how few women attended the event and even fewer performed in the evening events. However, being my first time working, I did not ask questions I just did my job.

As I worked in the industry longer, I came to realize the obvious: Not only are women underrepresented, they also must portray this over-sexualized image. During the day, I noticed the women who were asked to sign, or approached by A&R representatives, were women who already fit the “image.” However, this was not only a “women’s” issue, but also the men who attended had a certain style that reflected their genre of music. Tattoos, multi-colored hair, leather boots and a spiked bracelet usually represented the rockers, while baggy jeans, long T-shirt, do-rag and a gold chain embodied the hip-hop artist. Of course, these are generalizations of each group. However, it begs the question of what image one must portray to be in the music industry. And could these images portrayed in the music industry perpetuate the gender representation for each man and woman in the greater society?

Not only was there a look each artist depicted, there was a role each artist played. To explain, I will give two categories for each gender and a genre for each. Again, these are oversimplified for ease of understanding of what was actually taking place. First, the rock genre had one of two patterns: the “hard rocker” or the “sensitive singer/song writer.” The women had

either the “hard-rocker chick” or the “nature and soft spoken signer/songwriter.” For the urban scene, the men had one image of either “street credibility” or “sensually for the ladies” and the women fit in the scale of “rough rider” to “soul.”

I found myself at the latest conference merely watching all the attendees and being amazed at what I was seeing. Here was gender representation or, as Judith Butler (1990) describes it, gender performance, right in front of me. The artists were not only reflecting the music they played, but also imitating the gender role they had accepted.

This intrigued me. I started asking questions: How do people know what to look and act like? Where are these images coming from? Why and what reason are these individuals “acting out” their ideas of gender? I have always been a fan of music, and could name almost every song and artist who sang it. From a young age, I have followed the careers of many artists, and could ramble off musical facts. However, I never noticed the gender performance of the industry, until being in the industry and seeing it right in front of me.

Once a musician makes it into the industry, they are highly encouraged to join a performing rights organization. These organizations protect the songwriters or composers of music from copyright infringements, as well as make sure they are compensated when their music is played in public. These performing rights organizations are for anyone in the industry, such as a songwriter or a publisher.

The performing rights organizations have been around for many years and are a vital part of the music industry. ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) this past year celebrated their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI) is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and SESAC, originally known as the Society of European Stage Authors & Composers, (now referred to only as SESAC) has been in operation since 1930. All of these

cooperation's protect the publishing and recording rights of the songwriter and publisher. Once a band establishes its first demo, it is recommended the band become a member of one of these organizations in order to protect its music from copyright.

The industry has taken a difficult turn in recent years. With the advent of peer-to-peer sharing of music files, the music cannot be tracked, and the artist of the music cannot get paid (this being only one of many reasons for the industry downturn). Because of this, many artists debate whether they should go "mainstream" (sign with a label), or if they should remain "indie" (not sign with a label). Artists have carved out an image each must uphold, but where does each performer, before he or she makes it big, receive images on what to look like and how to act?

From birth, we are inundated with media images, informing us how we should look, act, identify, treat others, assess attractiveness and respond to each other. Mark Breedlove, a behavioral endocrinologist, says, "We're born with predispositions, but it's society that amplifies them and exaggerates them" (Blum, 1998, p. 46). Julia Wood (1994) explains how, from the first moments of life, everyone is exposed to a process of gender socialization that depicts one's characteristics, behaviors and attributes of what it means to be male or female. From the pinks and blues we wear as a child to the Barbie's and G. I. Joes we play with, this is what Wood refers to as "gender lives."

Over the past 40 years, gender roles, gender identification and gender representation has become a main stage for popular culture research. Gender has been researched and analyzed in many areas of study: psychological, biological and sociological. From a sociological perspective, gender is formed and disseminated through "institutional, economic, social, and interpersonal practices." (Wallis, 2005, p. 3). In his groundbreaking book *His/Her/Self*, Filene introduces "gender identities" as not merely moving beyond behavior and attitudes but rather understanding

one's self. This is done through interacting with other individuals as to understand the cultural implications of the expectations of the social institution. This process takes time and it becomes set within the individual's history (1998). Not only does gender inform all of the above implications, it also encourages a power struggle between the sexes.

Both men and women in today's media market have to live up to unrealistic views of what and who they should be. Wood (2003) has discovered that most research indicates three common threads in today's media. First, white males are the cultural norm while women and minorities are represented as unimportant or invisible. Second, media's representation of men and women only emphasizes the already stereotypical idea of gender. Third, the traditional roles of men and women only emphasize the unequal power balance between the sexes. Most media-influenced gender portrayals have found stereotypical representations of controlling males and nurturing females in television, children's literature, print media and popular music (Signorielli & Lears, 1992; Lawrence & Joyner, 1991).

Due to changes in society, particularly within the past decades, one would believe that the media's depiction of men and women would change. However, referring back to Wood's three common themes in media, this is likely not the case. Most of the research suggests that images of women have stayed constant with gender stereotypes. While men's images typically display men within an occupation, more recently, men have to battle the issue of their bodies.

This research will explore what images of men and women are being displayed on the cover of *Rolling Stone*. The study takes a longitudinal approach assessing gender representations for men and women. By identifying both genders representations, one can see if there is a shift in women's by addressing change in males. If both genders indicate the same shift in representation there is a sense of equality, but if the representation of both genders differs over time, this

indicates a differences in how men and women are presented in media. This quantitative study addresses what images of men and women are being portrayed on the cover of *Rolling Stone* from the beginnings of the publication in 1967 to 2004. First, this study looks at *Rolling Stone*, why media content matters with the formation of gender representation, and a discussion of the hypothesis and research questions.

## CHAPTER 2

### HISTORY OF *ROLLING STONE*

In 1966, John Lennon informed a New England journalist, “We are more popular than Jesus now,” and the Beatles shipped liquid acid in an airtight camera lens, saying, “they were better for it” (Draper, 1990, p. 55). In June 1967, all doubts of the Beatles’ musical abilities dissipated with the release of *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band*. The song “She’s leaving home” is a song about a girl running away from home and reminding her parents, “fun is the only thing money can’t buy” (Draper, 1990). This song reflected the counter-culture of San Francisco – a counter -culture created by the American youth. It was the music that explained the youths’ mentality and the music instructed the youth how to participate: “Be sure to wear some flowers in your hair.” Musical heroes illustrated the youths’ ideas, motives and interest, and the youths’ bible was about to be born, *Rolling Stone*, to cover it all.

It was the Summer of Love and thousands upon thousands of young Americans ran away from home and headed for San Francisco (Anson, 1981). The Haight-Ashbury district was overtaken by a counter-culture or “tribal culture” of young adults expressing free love, ideas, acid trips, flowers, Human Be-In, music concerts, beads, peaceful gatherings and a change in America that was never seen before (Anson, 1981).

Many media outlets covered this group of young individuals, labeled “Hippies” (Michel Fallon, a San Francisco writer, coined the name), and their stories of “Hashbury.” The major television outlet showed “Hippie Hill in Golden Gate Park, trip parties, dancers and light shows, free concerts in the Panhandle and hippies holding flowers or panhandling” (Wenner, 1987, p. 17). The Gray Line Tour Bus Company gave tours through the Haight-Ashbury district with a creative and psychedelic script beginning with, “The Hippie Hop was the only foreign bus tour

within the continental United States” (Anson, 1981, p. 16). *Time*’s “Man of the Year” was “anyone in the world under 25” (Wenner, 1987, p. 23) because they were “not just a new generation, but a new kind of generation” (Anson, 1981, p. xviii).

At the same time, a depressed, twenty-one-year-old Berkeley dropout lived in his mother’s basement with his girlfriend, Jane (Draper, 1990). Jann Wenner was working at the local Laundromat and was a rock ‘n’ roll journalist that no one would publish (Draper, 1990). Chet Helms, a friend and fellow journalist, asked Wenner to be a part of a new magazine called *Straight Arrow*. The magazine would cover the tribal aspect of the hippie culture (Draper, 1990). Wenner attended a month’s worth of meetings, but the process was moving too slowly. He decided to begin his own magazine, but one that covered the music of the culture and not the tribal aspects of the culture (Draper, 1990). According to Wenner, hippies were not communicating through the culture, but rather communicating through the music of the culture (Draper, 1990). With his own ambition, enthusiasm and entrepreneurship, *Rolling Stone* was created.

Wenner gathered together \$7,500 from friends and family to create a truly revolutionary rock ‘n’ roll magazine. This was also a way for the “ultimate groupie” (Draper, 1990, p. 12) to meet his rock ‘n’ roll idols: John Lennon, Mick Jagger and Bob Dylan. “I always felt Jann had a real fan’s mentality,” one of his friends and associates, William Randolph Hearst III explained (Menand, 1991). Wenner wanted his magazine to be extraordinary. He envisioned a magazine that covered the music instead of one that explained or exulted it. The name for the magazine came from a Bob Dylan song:

*How does it feel*

*To be without a home*



*A complete unknown*

*Like a rolling stone?*

The magazine was to read professionally with many facts, articles and statistics from the industry like *Billboard* but look stylish and hip like *Sunday Ramparts*. Wenner felt that most of the music magazines during this time looked young and only gawked at the music celebrities rather than covering the music. Still in the process of designing the flag, Wenner asked Dugald Stermer if he could use his design of the *Sunday Ramparts* for *Rolling Stone*. Stermer, believing there was no chance for this magazine to make it and wanting to show some goodwill, said yes (Draper, 1990).

At the end of the Summer of Love, *Rolling Stone* was located at 746 Brannan in a rundown warehouse at the south-of-Market district (Draper, 1990). The staff, mostly volunteers, sweated from the heat that was produced from the hot lead used for printing. On November 18, the final minutes were being counted down when Wenner ripped an unfinished logo from Rick Griffin, a San Francisco psychedelic poster artist who was planning to refine the draft, to get it to the printer on time (Wenner, 1998). Volume 1, No. 1 displayed a picture of John Lennon on the cover in the movie *How I Won the War*. Wenner states, “In hindsight, it was terribly prescient of me and *Rolling Stone* to have John Lennon on the first cover. That one little photograph speaks volumes about the marriage of music and movies and politics that came to define *Rolling Stone* (Wenner, 1998, p. 8). This first issue featured the Grateful Dead drug bust at Haight-Ashbury. Jerry Garcia, lead singer of the Grateful Dead, stated he loved the story and pictures, “And there’s a picture of Bobby handcuffed to Florence, coming down the stairs with a victorious grin. It was incredible” (Garcia, Reich and Wenner, 1972, p. 27).

The magazine hit the newsstands and with every issue a free roach clip was included (“This Week in Music History”, 2005). Wenner wrote his first editor’s note, which explained what this new rock ‘n’ roll magazine was setting out to do, and has now become the magazine’s foundation:

You’re probably wondering what we are trying to do. It’s hard to say: sort of a magazine and sort of a newspaper. The name of it is *Rolling Stone*, which comes from an old saying: “A rolling stone gathers no moss.” Muddy Waters used the name for a song he wrote; the Rolling Stones took their name from Muddy’s song; and “Like a Rolling Stone” was the title of Bob Dylan’s first rock & roll record.

We have begun a new publication reflecting what we see are the changes in rock ‘n’ roll and the changes related to rock ‘n’ roll. Because the trade papers have become so inaccurate and irrelevant, and because the fan magazines are an anachronism, fashioned in the mold of myth and nonsense, we hope that we have something here for the artist and the industry, and every person who ‘believes in the magic that can set you free.’

*Rolling Stone* is not just about music, but also about the things and attitudes that the music embraces. We’ve been working quite hard on it, and we hope you can dig it. To describe it any further would be difficult without sounding like bullshit, and bullshit is like gathering moss (Wenner, 1967).

The covers were first given little thought and done on the fly. They were often ripped from other publications, (RS 12, Bob Dylan reaching for a crucifix was taken from a French rock magazine, *Salut les Copains*. RS indicates the *Rolling Stone* cover number), the band’s own photos, or a simple background and headshot (Warren, 1998). However, bands of the ‘60s began to realize that their sound was not the only thing that mattered; it was their image that sold records (Menand, 1991). Many bands realized for their name to be received, their image must follow. This became the obsession, to be on the cover of *Rolling Stone*.

Michael Saisbury, the first professional art director for *Rolling Stone*, says, “*Rolling Stone*’s identity was not only how it read, but also how it looked. And that was defined by the photography. The typography and newspaper format were intended to give a youth publication legitimacy and credibility, but the pictures added personality and depth” (Warren, 1987, p. 13).

Chief photographer Annie Leibovitz was one of the most influential cover photographers for *Rolling Stone*. With one hundred forty-two covers, Leibovitz “is one of the handful of people who can be said to have been a principal in creating what *Rolling Stone* became” (Warren, 1998, p. 18). Leibovitz recently received the American Society of Magazine Editors’ greatest magazine cover of the past 40 years (Ingrassia, 2004). The cover was of John Lennon, naked and in the fetal position next to Yoko Ono, who was fully clothed. This was the tribute cover for Lennon’s death. He was shot only hours after the photo shoot.

Not only did *Rolling Stone* produce timeless magazine covers, but also excellent journalism came from *Rolling Stone*. Many articles have won national awards for *Rolling Stone*, such as pieces on the Charles Manson case, Karen Silkwood, Patty Hearst and the AIDS epidemic. Hunter S. Thompson was the most popular writer for *Rolling Stone* with Gonzo journalism and his *Fear and Loathing* articles.

*Rolling Stone* today resides on Fifth Avenue in New York branching out into many mediums. It has partnered with SIRIUS radio creating Stream 135 (“*Rolling Stone* Magazine and SIRIUS”, 2003). Wenner Media is now publishing *Us Weekly* and *Men’s Journal* (Dumenco, 2005), and it created a partnership with *Walt Disney Company* (“Disney, Wenner Media,” 2001). It has released several books that documented musical groups in *The Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock & Roll* (2001), and reviewed many albums in the *Complete Album Guide* (1992). *Rolling Stone* documented its history in an ABC special titled ‘Where It’s At: The Rolling Stone State of the Union’ (Berlinger & Sinofsky, 1998), and promoted political interests in the Campus Invasion Tour (“AT&T Teams With MTV,” 1998).

*Spin* debuted in 1994 and used *Rolling Stone* as a blueprint. Mr. Guccione, the creator and founder of *Spin*, stated, “My model for *Spin* was *Rolling Stone* of the ‘70s, which meant

something to me when I was a young man. My romanticism was to parallel what *Rolling Stone* meant to me when I was 18 and have *Spin* be that to today's people who are 18" (Kim, 1996, p. S8). Other magazines have been created using the same philosophy, such as *Vibe* and *Tracks* (Bauder, 2003). However, Wenner believes that *Rolling Stone* still has no true competitors (Hay, 2004).

The times have changed from peace and free love to fast-paced Internet frenzy, the baby-boomers have grayed, *Rolling Stone's* flag has changed through the years, but one thing has remained constant, the fact that *Rolling Stone* continues to cover the essence of rock 'n' roll. "Rolling Stone is much more than a magazine, it is a cultural institution. The magazine has a legacy of documenting rock and pop culture, not just as an art form, but as a way of life and as a catalyst for social change" (Hay, 2004, p. 86).

### **Demographics of Rolling Stone**

In the early days of *Rolling Stone*, it controlled the market of rock 'n' roll reporting. However, in today's market, the choices of information are endless with different modes of communication covering all types of genres and information (Scherer, 2002). "Back when *Rolling Stone* was publishing these seven-thousand-word stories, there was no *CNN* and no Internet. And now you can travel instantaneously around the globe, and you don't need these long stories to get up to speed," Wenner remarks about the ever-changing media-reporting industry (Scherer, 2002).

Today, *Rolling Stone* has had to make a key decision in this changing market. With the baby-boomers aging and a younger generation on the rise, Wenner chose both (Donaton, 1991). They attribute this choice to their lasting success, while this decision and solution has plagued many.

As the market ages, different print and television media have to battle the question of whom they should appeal to (Donaton, 1991). Many accuse *Rolling Stone* of leaving its musical roots with promoting pop-bubble gum icon with Britney Spears appearing on the cover four times in three years (Scherer, 2002). Robert Wallace, managing editor of *Rolling Stone*, says it will always strive for a younger audience. “We cover rock music and if that’s your beat, you stay young by definition,” he says. “The music changes and that’s a reflection in our changing audience. If we decided to age with our initial reader, we’d be covering the music they liked 20 years ago” (Hulin-Salkin, 1987).

Even though the magazine tries to keep ties with its first generation and interest the 30-plus market, *Rolling Stone* has to keep its main interest on teens and young adults with scandalous images of women on the cover (Bauder, 2003). Even if this is true, many baby-boomers still keeps tabs on the magazine to keep up-to-date with the most recent happenings of the industry and read the non-music articles (Hulin-Salkin, 1987).

The magazine has found itself not only on unstable ground with the target market, but also on its overall readership. Their first followers were aging and coming of age was a younger generation with different musical heroes. The industry leaders that first followed *Rolling Stone* began to see the magazine in a different light. As an example, Clive Davis, who once made the magazine required reading when he worked for Columbia Records, viewed the magazine as not as progressive as it once was (Draper, 1990). One of the magazine’s top writers stated, “I don’t think Jann has a vision for *Rolling Stone* anymore. I think he had a vision, at one point, and he got it rolling, and now he is along for the ride” (Draper, 1990, p. 19). However, the real money is from the newsstands where “white teenage boys with zits” pay the full price every two weeks

(Draper, 1990, p. 17). The magazine's target market is 18 to 34, with 70% of the readership being 18 to 29 (Donaton, 1993), and is primarily male-orientated (Reilly, 1989).

However, this is a market that cannot be ignored with 46 million consumers between 18 and 29 in age range (Donaton, 1993). Wenner admitted aiming the magazine's marketing to this age group, which turned out to be a wise decision (Reilly, 1989) because from this group, 30% of males agree that the economy looks good for the upcoming year and are willing to spend money (Pollack, 2004). This is good news for Wenner Media with a "stunning" 2005 December and the company expects a "pretty strong" first quarter with sales (Pollack, 2004). Every two weeks, anywhere from 190,000 to 220,000 consumers pay the full price for a copy of *Rolling Stone*. Many do so on sheer impulse (Draper, 1990) and are young adolescents.

With many of *Rolling Stone* readers being young men, there needs to be an examination of the images they are being exposed to during this prime age. Media priming suggests that images we are exposed to become images we expect of ourselves. What are these images from *Rolling Stone*, and what are they expressing to the youth?

*Rolling Stone* still holds the No. 1 position for consumer music magazines (Hay, 2004), and it still has 16 million in readership. This number includes the magazines that are passed along; 1.3 million have a subscription (Falsani, 2005). With an arra of musical genres, *Rolling Stone* covers include everyone's musical heroes, from Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin and Eric Clapton to Justin Timberlake, Bono and Gwen Stefani.

*Rolling Stone* has covered musical geniuses for more than thirty years, influencing every generation of young adults. This magazine has influenced many by its phenomenal journalism, still having a large impact on today's musical, entertainment and political industries. If a picture says a thousand words, *Rolling Stone* covers have spoken millions in all different tongues.

Through the company's beginning struggles to today's No. 1 consumer music magazine, *Rolling Stone* has influenced all who read.

The magazine's trademark is its cover. It has always pushed the envelope and dared its viewers to do the same. What are the covers exposing to its viewers? More specifically, what gender representations are individuals on the cover of *Rolling Stone* presenting for both men and women?

## CHAPTER 3

### WHY MEDIA CONTENT MATERS

Much research is conducted to better understand the effects of mass-mediated messages. Out of this research, many theories and ideas have been proposed concerning the effects media has to educate and influence our society. Joseph Klapper (1960) states that the media is not the only related cause of audience effect, but rather the messages from media are buttressed with other influential variables such as relationships. Furthering Klapper's argument, media can only influence pre-existing attitudes, not create new ones (1960). However, since this study, many researchers claim media has a large impact on attitudes and beliefs.

A rich body of research on media effects suggests the important role mediated messages can play in affecting attitudes, emotions and behaviors. As such, if our society is being bombarded with stereotypical images of men and women, this could ultimately affect what we come to accept as norms for each gender. To that end, there are a number of theoretical models that suggest exactly how these mediated images could impact media users. These models include both of Petty, Priester & Brinol's direct-effect models (2002). Extended from this model is Bandura's dual paths of influence (1997), or the indirect-effect models such as that proposed by Klapper (Petty, Priester, & Brinol, 2002). Because of the large body of information about this subject, a limited selection of current media-effect theories will be discussed, although three key theories emerge particularly applicable to the current study: 1) cultivation theory; 2) media priming; and 3) uses and gratification. The selection of each theory has an impact on how *Rolling Stone* sends messages to the larger society, how these messages affect the individual consumer and how the consumer perceives the publication for consumption.



## **Cultivation Theory**

George Gerbner, a noted sociologist, developed cultivation theory as a means of explaining the relationship between media use and societal perceptions. This theory is not to indicate what people will do and not do but rather what people think or do something *about* or what they have in *common* (Lent, 1970). The theory has been mostly applied to television and how it is the “centralized system of storytelling. It is part and parcel of our daily lives... [it] brings a relatively coherent world of common images and messages into every home” (Littlejohn & Foss, 2005, p. 288). Since television defines our social culture as being the same or homogenous, Gerbner coined this effect as cultivation. The theory’s main focus looks at the long-term effect of television. It does not focus on one particular genre or type of content, but rather the exposure to media as a whole and the effects it has on society.

By implementing this theory, many studies have uncovered the under-representation of ethnicity and women, as well as perpetrating the idea of a “mean-world syndrome.” This study was conducted by a colleague of Gerbner, Nancy Signorielli, who reported that only one percent of the population are victims of violent crimes, but heavy exposure to media creates the belief that no one can be trusted (1990). People who are exposed to heavier television viewing create the belief that the world is violent with high crime rates, which causes consumers to be overly frightened and cautious with their real-world surroundings – a phenomenon cultivation scholars refer to as the “mean-world syndrome.”

Cultivation theory, at its core, defines what people believe about an issue being influenced by a body of media, such as television. This research will not indicate how people internalize these images, but rather addresses what images are on the cover of *Rolling Stone*. These images on the cover are being consumed by society, which contributes to the cultivation

effect of media by influencing its readers of stereotypical gender representation, furthering the belief that men and women should present themselves in a particular fashion. If this is the case, *Rolling Stone* becomes one of the many magazines and advertisements that further perpetuate stereotypical gender representation.

### **Media Priming**

While cultivation theory looks at the larger society and media consumption patterns, media priming refers to the effects of media “primes” on cognitive processing. Priming is defined as the effect of some preceding stimulus or event and how the individual reacts or defines a subsequent stimulus. Essentially, priming theorists argue that exposure to primes make relevant ideas and constructs more relevant. As such, judgments and decisions an individual makes will likely reflect what has been primed (Roskos-Ewoldsen, Roskos-Ewoldsen, Carpentier, 2002). Media educate individuals (via a prime) on how to react or believe in situations they come into contact with every day.

For example, Josephson’s (1987) media priming study indicates how young boys watching violent programming will act more aggressively when placed in a frustrating environment and confronted with a stimulus that triggers their violent cues. In this example, study participants were “primed” to react aggressively by violent programming. As such, when it came time to react to a frustrating situation, their violent constructs were more active than their non-violent constructs, making a violent response more likely. However, as with much of the priming literature, this study suggests that media-priming effects are short term, although an exact time frame is not clearly defined.

Anderson (1997) researched media priming with college undergraduates, discovering that violent media can prime both aggressive feelings and aggressive thoughts. This was conducted

through two studies in which the participants were shown two movie clips being violent or nonviolent. After viewing, the participants had to fill out a questionnaire assigning their hostility levels or their trait and state hostility levels. It was discovered that the participants who watched the violent movie clips did have a higher level of hostility.

Media priming can be seen in the realm of stereotyping. For example, exposure to stereotypical men's and women's images in rock music videos showed a relationship with more stereotypical ideas of men and women interacting in other videos (Hansen & Hansen, 1998). Research in media priming indicates that the media influence or enhance our stereotypical behaviors and reactions. These stereotypical images from the media allow the audience to receive general ideas about the social make-up of our society. These priming indicators come from a variety of sources (i.e., television, movies, magazines, advertisements) and all act as validation to these images (Roskos-Ewoldsen, Roskos-Ewoldsen, & Carpentier, 2002).

In the case with media priming, if it is a stimulus for individuals to act and behave in a certain manner, this could assess why individuals in the music industry play certain roles. Referring back to the generalized roles of each genre of music and the specific portrayal of the music they play, this may influence the young adults who admire and follow the musician. For example, if a young woman wanted to become a pop musician, images of Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera on the cover of *Rolling Stone* in seductive poses could influence the young woman and make her believe that this is the image she must portray to become successful. This is also true for the young man who sees his musical hero depicting aggressive behavior and the young man believes he, too, will have to uphold this image. These images make stereotypical thoughts of both sexes more accessible and available, which, in turn, make these ideas more likely to be used in evaluations and judgments for both men and women.

## Uses and Gratification

Cultivation theory identifies media with society, while media priming looks at the individual, but uses and gratification is more of a super-focused theory of media effects. Focusing on the consumer rather than the message, this theory implies that the users of *Rolling Stone* receive some type of gratification (Littlejohn & Foss, 2005). Consumers of *Rolling Stone* expect the publication to meet some type of need: information, beliefs, knowledge, status of using, etc. If that need is met, they will continue to use the publication. If the need is not met, they will cease the use of the publication.

As long as the magazine fulfills beliefs, attitudes and values of the consumer, the magazine will flourish. Because the publication has been around for almost 40 years, it has continued to meet the expectations of its readers. If the magazine does not continue to accomplish this task, its readership will decline, which was the case in the late '80s and early '90s (Wenner, 1987). To help increase readership, the magazine completed an interview with Axl Rose, and allowed him to review the questions before the interview, which was never allowed before. Yet, it helped the publication because this magazine was one of the highest grossing magazines due to the interview.

*Rolling Stone* is part of a large social construct of gender images for men and women. Being one of the many magazines that influence and impact the readers, it furthers the notions of what it means to be a man or woman in today's society. The first two theories indicate that this influence of attitudes and behaviors is a subtle act, and the consumer is often unaware of the unconscious process. The third theory indicates that the media one consumes must represent the consumer's attitudes and behaviors. If this is the case, *Rolling Stone*, being part of this greater influence, will continue to represent these images in order to mimic the beliefs of its readers.

These three theories indicate what is happening to our society because of the production of mass media images that potentially propagate unwarranted stereotypes. These mass media images educate and reinforce unrealistic images and ideas for both men and women. Yet, these images will not change because it is now expected and assumed from the consumers. The images educate, enforce, and eventually represent the consumer's attitudes and beliefs. These thoughts, attitudes and beliefs will only continue a circular behavior. If the images and representation do not imitate the consumer's attitudes, expectation is disrupted and the media usage will cease.

Media presents two different ideas of gender representation: an accurate portrayal and a created portrayal. The accurate portrayal gives a realistic depiction of men and women in society or what is currently believed about gender in today's society. The created portrayal indicates unrealistic ideas of what it means to be a man or woman in society, and these ideas only enhance gender stereotypes. Both of these representations help construct and reconstruct gender representation from media to society. Media must tread lightly in the area of constructing and reconstructing gender. If media's representation is not accepted by society, the media will not be used. However, if media's representation is accepted, it will not only be used, but willing participants will copy the ideas of gender presented by media. Then media begins a cycle with society in the representation of gender. Media will see what is in society, take these societal ideas of gender, manipulate the portrayal and place them back into the media after these representations have been reconstructed. These representations give instructions to the participants on how one presents their gender, but the created portrayal furthers the rejuvenated stereotypes in our society.

## CHAPTER 4

### MEDIA REPRESENTATION OF GENDER

Hundreds of researchers have examined gender roles, identification and representation. From Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* questioning women's roles in 1963 to Naomi Wolf's *The Beauty Myth* questioning women's representation in media in the '90s, both books have asked why women act certain ways and represent themselves in certain manners. More recent research has explored men's gender roles in works such as Micheal Kimmel's *Manhood in America* and Susan Faludi's *Stiffed*. These books critically question the images portrayed by mass media that influence gender's representation and identification. Some of the most provocative research dealing with gender has been in examination of advertisements. Advertisements allow for an in-depth examination of the representations of our culture and display a "realistic" image of daily life. Hundreds of advertisements reaching millions of individuals a day, several times a day, could have grave serious implications on society if these images portray unrealistic views. Advertisements create an examination tool for gender representation research. Because of the reach advertisements have to society, research can examine the effect of advertisements to consumers. These advertisement effects deal with gender representation for both men and women.

To conceptualize the terminology for this research, *gender* will be defined as male or female. *Gender representation* will be used to examine how each gender displays their selected representation by means of media-derived images. This paper examines the current literature on gender representation and the standards media place on both men and women. Much of the literature explores mass media through the lens of advertisements. However, this research is an extension of most advertisement research because it examines the covers of *Rolling Stone* instead

of traditional advertisements, with the underlining assumptions that the cover is the advertisement of this publication. Most research on advertising addresses the print media inside magazine publications, while the covers are used as a form of advertisement. However, many individuals see countless number of covers from all forms of publications. For this research, advertisements will be used as a general idea of what gender representations are being portrayed through media.

Advertising has become a target for heavy examination by researchers interested in the effects of advertising on society. Within many studies, the results have shown that advertisements stereotype images of women and gender (Kang, 1997; Kilbourne, 1990; Allan & Coltrane, 1996), women's perception of body acceptance (Posavac, Posavac, & Posavac, 1998), attitudes and expectations of women (Signorelli, 1989), acceptance of sexual aggression against women (Lanis & Covell, 1995), and belief in the rape myth and negative attitudes toward the women's movement (MacKay & Covell, 1997). However, it is not only women who are being scrutinized by the media. This has become a phenomenon that affects men as well. That is, as suggested by shifts in advertising, men are being pushed out of their realm of power and into a new role of the nurturing male (Levant, 1997) and slowly becoming the gender stereotyped for a new market (Garst & Bodenhausen, 1997). Men have been represented with over-muscular images (Petrie et al., 1996; Roberts & Gettman, 2004), portrayed in acts of violence (Katz, 1995), and presented as over-sexualized (Rohlinger, 2002).

With the increase of print advertisements, not only is the reader introduced to what products and services to purchase (Linder, 2004), but these images also influence the reader's attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, sexual ideas and values (Kang, 1997; Belknap & Leonard, 1991; Lanis & Covell, 1997). This exposure also may influence negative attitudes toward both men and

women and can reinforce unrealistic stereotypes of how each should behave, different types of social status, and what roles they play within society (Belknap & Leonard, 1991; Kilbourne, 1990; Klassen, Jasper, Schwartz, 1993). These images also can manipulate how both sexes should be treated, looked upon, feel about themselves and what one should expect from each (Lindner, 2004; Roberts and Gettman, 2004).

This idea ties back to the three theories from the previous chapter. With over-exposure of stereotypical images from many different media vehicles, these images become the perceived norms in society. These media vehicles are all around the consumer, from television, magazines, advertisements and billboards. With all of the images swallowing the individual and brainwashing what it means to be a man or a women in society, priming begins. Over and over, these ideas are reinforced with images from mass media and eventually becoming the social norm. If a particular medium violates this social norm, the consumer may stop usage because it does not reflect the attitudes and beliefs that consumer carries. Yet, these attitudes and beliefs were constructed by mass media.

The media, mirroring a reflection of our society, have increasingly created powerful images that have shaped, constructed and reconstructed different values in our society over the past 40 years (Signorieli, 1989). The 1920s introduced “real” people into the advertising images, but ironically these images only created what real people should “stand for” as it applies with social values, family structure, status differences and hierarchical authority (Jhally, 1990). Kilbourne takes this a step further, indicating how these mass media images not only reflect our social values, but also educate us on “concepts of success, worth, love, sexuality, popularity and normalcy. They tell us who we are and who we should be. Sometimes, they sell addictions” (1989, p. 121).



The non-interactive nature of mass-mediated images does not easily allow the reader to respond to the media's overwhelmingly harsh images (Belknap & Leonard, 1991). Our society is educated from these constructed images by what men and women are and how they should be. A young woman who is forming her self-identity sees how these images from an array of media outlets (print media, television, etc.) could influence her definition of what it means to be a woman. Similarly, for young men, they see the images of an individual who has an overly muscular physique working in an office, and this is the image they could strive for. However, these images could educate them on the opposite sex giving a misrepresentation. These images could enforce ideas of how one should treat, act and respond to the other. Because of this argument, the messages enforce ideas of gender stereotyping and what is acceptable treatment.

Media is where most young individuals receive information on how to pursue relationships and respond to each other. If these are the ideas they are receiving, they will only mimic what they will see. Many adolescent consumers use mass media unattended by an adult or parental supervision because of the availability of television or Internet in their bedroom, all the while developing their sense of self (Larson, 1995).

This is the essence of cultivation theory, media priming, and uses and gratification. At this young age, individuals are educating themselves on how to behave based on social norms. Because of all of the unattended media usage in the adolescent's bedroom, the child has many types of interactive media, educating and priming the child on what it means to not only portray one's gender, but how to respond to the other. Again, these images are rehearsed and played out over and over; all the while the child is priming its own attitudes and beliefs. At this young age, the cyclical process begins and the child's image of self becomes the image of mass media's

stereotypical gender representation. However, once the adolescent's beliefs and attitudes are established, other media that do not mirror the adolescent's thoughts are discontinued.

Once a child is exposed to it's culture, as contrived by the media, the child is exposed to what is believed and perceived to be true (Penton & Perrett, 2000). In American culture, a child is being exposed to mainly sexualized images at early ages (Carpenter, 1998; Durham, 1998). Therefore, it is safe to say that children through adults are educated as to what images are derived in explaining the roles of men and women, furthering the research suggesting that our "culture is taught via mass media vehicles of popular culture" (Englis, B., Solomon, M., Ashmore, R., 1994, p. 51). According to Jan Kurtz, *Dream Girls: Women in Advertising*, the images we see and believe to be the beautiful images of women are, and have consistently been, "young, white, and emaciated" (1997, p. 76). Men, being insecure about economic sphere with the emergence of women, have one advantage over females in the realm of physical size and this is what advertisers have chosen to portray (Katz, 1995). What this indicates is while women are being portrayed in the work force, men will still be portrayed physically larger, which portrays the woman as subservient.

These media images are originated through media gatekeepers: the editors, producers, and individuals who possess the power to mold gender representation in our culture. Furthermore, once these ideas are implemented, they become accepted and supported by the general public (Solomon, Ashmore, & Longo, 1992) believing they must portray these stereotypical gender roles. Print and electronic media form the influences of society of what is considered maleness and femaleness (Polce, Myers, Kliewer, & Kilmartin, 2001; Schmitt, Leclerc, Dube-Rioux, 1988). These media influences are around every corner and on every shelf

of our everyday life. The media's description of gender is perpetuated in our popular culture by many vehicles of communication.

We as a country ingest more mass-produced communications than paid work, play or sleep (Gerbner, 2002). Furthering the idea of cultivation, if mass media is our vehicle of communication, exposing us to a contrived idea about our beliefs and values, this will have a great impact upon our cultural understanding of gender. This is a huge problem when both men and women are consumed with not only advertiser's images, but these images fall off the printed page and walk out of the television and onto the streets. These images turn into our parents, siblings, friends, neighbors, lovers, and children, becoming inescapable, so we all have to live up to the manufactured images of media. These mass-media images influence on us what to look like, how to act, respond, treat others, and whom we are and should be as men and women. Each of us becomes primed by media in our behaviors and judgments (Roskos-Ewoldsen, D. R., Roskos-Ewoldsen, B. R., & Carpentier, 2002), particularly those images that further stereotypes (Hansen & Krygowski, 1994). That, in turn, allows the media to define our societal gender perception of what is acceptable representation of each gender. Just exploring how men and women should act and be treated is not the only indicator of media's effect. By looking at the economic side of gender representation, women spend \$20 billion annually on cosmetics (Wolf, 2002), buying and trying products that promise to be the next "fountain of youth." Men are trying to live up to their image by spending \$130 million on liposuction, facelifts, nose-reshaping and eyelid surgery in 1997 (Rohlinger, 2002), and the year before spending \$12 million on penile implants, while silicone calf and pectoral implants, and eating disorders are on the rise (Fraser, 1999).

## **Women in Media**

Stemming from the influence of the women's movement, women's images have been studied for many years, exposing stereotypical images in all forms of media. With the advancements of women's roles, particularly in the work force, images portraying women should have adapted with their advancements. However, in many research studies, this is not the case. In a study conducted by Lindner (2004), she found that *Time*, a general interest magazine, portrayed women in a stereotypical gender representation as being weak, inferior or dependent on a man. *Vogue*, a women's fashion magazine, portrayed women as sexualized images in inferior positions and lower social power to men. This is a common theme in advertisements: portraying women as weak, childish, dependent, domestic, irrational, subordinate creatures who bear children, and are incomparable to men (Kang, 1997).

Another study conducted by Malkin, Wornian and Chrisler (1999) compared the covers of popular men's and women's magazines for gender messages. They found men's popular magazines provided entertainment and tips for improving one's life by expanding knowledge, hobbies and activities. Women's magazines focused on improving one's life by changing appearance, especially by losing weight. It is implied through both images and text that being thin means being happier, sexier and more loveable. One study conducted by Sullivan & O'Connor (1988) found a 60% increase in advertisements that merely portray women as decorative roles. They found that the woman's role in advertising is to be sexy and alluring. While these studies discuss what is found in media, LaTour and Henthorne (1994) studied content in ads that contain a strong overt sexual appeal, resulting in much less-favorable attitudes toward the ads, the brands and purchase intentions, as well as response on moral, philosophical and ethical dimensions.

Unfortunately, there has been little change in how women have been portrayed in print advertisements. According to Signorielli (1989, p. 341), over the past 10 to 15 years, sex role images of women have been “stable, traditional, conventional and support the status quo.” All the images in the media portray a false scenario of what it means to be a woman. Many false ideas and thoughts need to be addressed to help change these portrayals of women. To begin, there needs to be a focus on how women truly are depicted in our society. However, what is created in these advertisements is gender stereotyping that reinforces society’s limited gender roles (MacKay & Covell, 1997; Signorielli, 1989).

### **Media Standards for Women**

“For the majority of people, looks matter,” as quoted from Sarnoft and Swirsky (1998, p. 1). In today’s culture, there are several consistent themes about gender representation, with the largest being the female attractiveness and the female body. These standards of attractiveness are of a young, toned, thin and healthy body (Clarke, 2001). However, these ideas of what is beautiful and what is not beautiful are not constructed from one’s own judgments. It is feedback from the gatekeepers of media. These gatekeepers, usually fashion and beauty editors, create vital and central images for the public that construct ideas on what is beautiful and what is not before the public has a chance to speak (Englis et al., 1994; Solomon, Ashmore, & Longo, 1992). The images are usually created for selling a product. These images introduce the audience to ideas of how women should and want to be perceived (Solomon et al., 1992). While the idea of the body is one form of beauty (petite, thin, toned, and young), the ideas of facial attractiveness fall under many categories. The perceivers of different facial types mentally construct these types of beauty into diverse personalities and lifestyles (Solomon et al., 1992). Facial attractiveness is socially constructed and defines one aspect of beauty. Images of women have

always been seen on television dealing with what beauty is, but it is more than just facial attractiveness. It must consist of the image *and* attitude of the person to be considered attractive. The respondent will attempt to mimic this look and attitude to try to be attractive and beautiful. On the other hand, women will get offended if the look and attitude does not match (Kurtz, 1997). Beauty is multidimensional and does not have a formula of an exact look (Solomon et al., 1992).

Definite ideals of female beauty represented by media are more customary from both print and electronic media. These ideals can be broken down into selected categories: sexual/exotic, trendy, classic/feminine (Englis et al., 1994; Kurtz, 1997). Surprisingly, the research states that women have shown a stronger response to sexualized images of women compared to men (Kurtz, 1997). Yet, women also find these images of attractive and beautiful women intimidating and threatening (Posavac, Posavac, & Posavac, 1998). From whatever media source, there will be some variety of emulation to this perception of media's representation of women. It is believed that media users will construct these images of gender and development in the socialization process (Thomsen, S. R., Weber, M. M., Brown, L. B., 2002).

Not only do women have to maintain this idea of media's representation of beauty, they also have to uphold this idea of subordination. Many relationships involving women are seen in a ritual act that portrays an unbalanced and distorted idea of the power within the relationship (Goffman, 1979). Women to be seen as attractive also have to display this idea of helplessness and as if she is pulling herself out of the situation by diverting her eyes or slanting her head downward. Goffman calls this maneuver licensed withdrawal. He goes on to say that many of these "expressive behaviors" tend to be preserved as natural and deriving, so they are not deeply

studied, but need to be highly considered. These culturally influenced gendered behaviors are the ideas that place women in submissive and powerless roles (1979). When she is portrayed as a child, she will be received and thought of as child-like and unable to help herself.

Finally, in print media, women are perceived as sex objects and not as human beings. A woman is seen as “nonhuman” by presenting women as parts and not a whole person (Kilbourne & Lazarus, 1987), while men’s faces appear more often than their body (Sullivan & O’Connor, 1988). Having this separation of men’s faces and women’s bodies further the argument that women are inhuman because intelligence and personality is seen through the face. Without the face, women are reduced to an object.

### **Men in Media**

Growing out of feminine studies, much of gender research is done on and about women. Most of the research to date has focused on female gender roles with little emphasis on the male gender role (Garst & Bodenhausen, 1997; Fejes, 1998; Kimmel, 1996, Katz, 1995; Levant, 1997; Kolbe, & Albanses, 1997; Petrie et. al., 1996; Roberts & Gettman, 2004; Rohlinger, 2002). Katz (1995) noted, “There is a glaring absence of a thorough body of research” (p. 133). Furthermore Scott (1997) indicates that women are more aware of the gender differences because of the disparity done to them. This disparity has created a large body of research. However, it has not been until a few years back that men have begun to question their gender representation.

It is important to understand male gender representations because little research has done. Furthermore, it can provide greater depth to understanding women’s gender representation. As such, to understand what is happening with women’s gender representation being recast, one must also be sensitive to what is occurring with men’s gender representation (Filene, 1998, Kimmel, 1996). Further, conceptions of manhood have influenced many things from politics,

business, families, friendship, sex, sports, war and education all the while, men must adapt to changing ideas of manhood. Throughout history, men's images modify according to what it means to be masculine is a threat to men. If a man does not keep up a consistent image of manliness, he could be seen as insubstantial and incapable to other men (Kimmel, 1996). These threats make men reevaluate what images of themselves portray strength and masculinity so they are not viewed as weak or effeminate (Kimmel, 1996).

Men also have had their share of difficulties with gender, dating back in history and more predominate today with the feminist movement. Women were beginning to move outside the private realm to the public realm while men were having a difficult time deciphering the newly blurred lines of women's public and private spheres (Filene, 1998). Today, men are the new market for advertisers, and they are being bombarded with magazine covers and advertisements with images of an accepted man: career-oriented, muscular, financially stable, and in control and powerful.

Men receive messages from the media that influence their attitudes on what is considered "manliness," from their occupation to their ideas of sex. A study conducted by Vigorito and Curry found occupational portrayals of males appear in male-audience publication, and nurturing male roles were discovered in magazines read by women (1998). This only confirms the notion that men and women share different ideas of what the male role should be because they have different representations of what this role consists of. A study by Garst and Bodenhausen (1997) revealed that nontraditional men's gender representation might change and fluctuate, depending on the advertisers' message and influence.

Society has consistently portrayed men as being strong and independent, which has led to strength as a key component of the social constructions of manliness. Because of this socially



constructed idea of what it means to be a man, when he is presented in the media as such, the consumer reacts positively. Yet, when a man is presented in media with having any type of female qualities, it is usually reacted negatively by the consumer because it violates norms. As such, this seemingly creates a situation in which recurring themes of “manliness” are represented, thus making them more likely to be accepted by media users – a point argued by cultivation scholars.

### **Media Standards for Men**

With men becoming the new gender stereotype in media (Garst & Bodenhausen, 1997), there has been a backlash in the representation. Men in the media have not embraced the media’s representation of a family man (Levant, 1997) or as a nurturing father (LaRosa, 1989). Today’s men’s magazines are over exaggerating muscularity. Recent studies of three magazines with different target audiences (female, male and body-builder) all represent a different idea of men and muscularity: the less muscular in the female magazine to the most muscular in the body builder magazine (Frederick, Fessler, Haselton, 2005).

Petrie et al. (1996) looked at the number of physical fitness messages and the increase of fitness activities (such as gym memberships) in male fashion magazines. While this increased, the messages concerning weight and beauty declined since 1970. This indicates that men are being presented with the idea that having a toned body is more important than a beautiful face.

Deana Rohlinger argues in her article *Eroticizing men: Cultural influences on advertising and male objectification* that images of men are becoming sexualized to appeal to a new liberated women’s market, as well as a new male consumer (2002). Barthel states how men still hold power with images of men in boardroom meetings or playing sports, but when it comes to beauty and fashion, it is the power of choice (1994), unlike women, where it is a must.

The issues of power and manliness are the main images of males in mass media but manliness is also represented by the male body (Kimmel, 1996). Like the female body has been for many years, the male body is beginning to be objectified, sexualized and these unrealistic images are becoming the norm and expected in society.

With the increase of muscle mass, men's body size has increased significantly in portrayals from the 1950s to the 1990s (Spitzer, Hendersen, & Zivian, 1999). Pope, Katz, & Hudson (1993) describe this as a "reverse anorexia," which is an obsession with one gaining muscle mass. To further the argument, not only do men have to deal with the issue of body mass, but they also have to evaluate themselves on the images of sexual prowess, financial success and physical activities (McKinley, 1998).

### **Rationale and Hypothesis**

With little research conducted on male gender roles, one might ask the question why this study will look at both men and women. A simple answer: To understand the full picture of what is happening to women, the men must be viewed to see if the change is prevalent with both sexes. If only the women's roles are changing and not the men, this leads to a different conclusion than if both roles are altering together.

Much of the literature suggests the impact media has on viewers. Media priming indicates "media context may predispose an individual to pay more attention to some elements of a communication message than others and may influence the interpretation that a viewer gives a complex or ambiguous stimulus" (Stewart, Pavlou, & Ward, 2002, p. 376). To further extend the argument, most research with media priming and cultivation theory considers television as the primary source. Priming is typically done in an experimental setting addressing what effect is done to the individual psyche. I would argue that while these covers deal with visual elements,

and that is why print media cannot be ignored to its impact with these theories. By using print media, it can be applied to more realistic setting and the effect of these visual elements to the consumers. Television is a moving picture of gender roles played out on screen, while the still image on magazines can be studied, reviewed, passed around, duplicated and re-created. For this reason, print media have been selected as the artifact.

The magazine is *Rolling Stone*, because of its long-standing roots in print media, the subscription following, and the impact it has made in the music industry. *Rolling Stone* is considered “the most thrilling phenomenon of contemporary American journalism, which had established its fortunes upon the economics of rock music, and found its readers among the lively, restless, affluent and stereophonic *avant garde* of young America” (Morris, 1980, p. ix).

This longitudinal study assesses the gender representation on the magazine cover from 1967 to 2004. It will assess both male and female gender roles on the cover of the publication. Most research deals with the advertisements within the publication, but little research has explored magazine covers as a form of gender representation. A magazine cover is the advertisement for the publication and is the initial attraction to the reader. The image influences the reader whether to purchase the magazine (Malkin, Wornian, & Chrisler, 1999), especially from a magazine that is known for its eccentric covers. Further, the pictures on the magazine, along with the captions, are all the reader has time to look at in the store. The cover is an important aspect to the magazine because a more vivid visual image greatly increases the amount of readership (Granat, 1991).

A main reason for selecting this publication is because the music industry is a difficult and unforgiving industry. In this industry, most of the top producers and artists are men; women state that to become recognized, they have to portray an overtly sexualized image (Daily News,

September 2004). *Rolling Stone*'s readership plateaued, then decreased in years past, but today the magazine has continually increased sales. In 1998, sales increased 14%, placing it 23<sup>rd</sup> out of the top 500 magazines (Ennis, 1999). Even though the roots of *Rolling Stone* are in the rock genre, it encompasses many other genres such as country, rap, jazz, hip-hop and punk, as well as, movies, television, politics and pop culture. The magazine our ideas of politics, religion, what is culturally entertaining, hip and stylishly correct. To further the publication's importance, many adolescents admire and look up to many musicians the magazine covers. Britney Spears to 50 Cent have all been called heroes by their adolescent fans. Needless to say, their young fans mimic the artist's style and image, but while viewing this publication, ideas of gender are developing, as well as a sense of self.

Three working hypotheses and three research questions have been created through the review of the literature to further understand gender representation on print media. To help better understand the image of men and women on *Rolling Stone*'s cover, Goffman's gender displays will be used, as well as Kang's indicator of body displays.

The first hypothesis emerges from Kang's (1997) study in which Goffman's gender display, licensed withdrawal, and the author's conception of body display both showed an increase throughout the thirty years of publication. Licensed withdrawal assesses how the individual is mentally engaged with her surroundings while body display indicates how much skin the individual is revealing. By specifically assessing these two displays, one can argue if licensed withdrawal increases the woman is mentally removing herself from her surroundings and body display evaluates the woman's clothing or lack of clothing. The lack of clothing heightens the women's sexuality. With both

displays increasing within the publication, it would indicate a woman would be depicted as overtly sexual with a willingness to be mentally incapable of taking care of her self.

H1: Throughout the decades, the stereotypical portrayal of women will increase with licensed withdrawal and body display.

By selecting the specific displays from Goffman that will indicate the portrayal of women, the hypothesis will examine how in the presence of a man, a woman will be portrayed as submissive to the man. Much research indicates that when a woman is present with a man, she will be portrayed in a more stereotypical submissive role.

H2: When men are present with women on the cover, women's stereotypical gender displays and body display will increase.

Because women's gender roles represented by the media have not changed within the last 40 years, this longitudinal study will observe the consistency women. For the third hypothesis and relating it to Kang's 1997 study, the researcher expects for many of the gender displays from Goffman to remain consistent, but Kang's indicator of body displays to increase throughout the publication.

H3: With slight change in women's gender displays, women's body displays will increase significantly.

With little research conducted on the male gender portrayal, the first question would like to address if there is any consistency or change of the male role through the publication. Because this publication targets young males, it is important to address what images the publication is sending to their young readers. Yet, with little research on what images are being portrayed, this question also will be compared to the women's portrayal to examine how both images are being portrayed.

RQ1: Which rubrics from Goffman and Kang, if any, will change through the publication for men's gender roles?

Kang's body display will be the contributing rubric for the second research question. It will look at how men and women are sexually portrayed. With the increase in sexual images, especially for women, the question explores exactly how extreme this portrayal is and to see if this is the same argument for men. If men are being portrayed sexually, it generates a different response than if just the women are being portrayed overtly sexually.

RQ2: Will both men's and women's portrayals of sexuality increase through the years of the publication?

The final research question will examine how each sex is portrayed when presented alone and when the opposite sex is present. Will there be any change if a man is with a woman on the cover of the publication? Will women by themselves be portrayed in one manner and when in the presence of a male, will they be portrayed differently?

RQ3: Will the gender displays of both sexes change if the opposite sex is present?

## CHAPTER 5

### METHOD

The methodology for this study is content analysis exploring mainly manifest content that will also reveal some underlying (latent) themes. For example, if the variables of body clowning and mock child play under Ritualization of subordination were coded, the latent connotation would lead one to believe that this individual would be incapable of taking care of themselves because they would be presented as a child. Using a longitudinal approach, gender representations on the cover were coded to symbolize what was being portrayed for that particular year. From the beginning of publication in 1967 to 2004, every publication will be eligible; however, the selection for the covers will be selected by random start using Babbie's random number table (2004). The covers will be coded from *Rolling Stone: The complete covers*. This collection has all of the covers from 1967 to 1997. The rest of the covers were collected from the official *Rolling Stone* Web site. Both men's and women's gender representations will be recorded using Goffman's gender displays and Kang's body displays. By assessing both sexes, one can identify what is happening to one sex and see if it happens to the other. Recording both sexes will buttress the argument of the role changes for men and women.

The total number of covers during the publication of *Rolling Stone* is 964 and a systematic sampling was collected for the covers that would be coded. To obtain a 95% confidence level and 5% confidence interval the sample size contained 275 covers ( $p < .05$ ). Each character on the cover was coded individually.

#### **Presentational Self**

In Erving Goffman's classic text, *Gendered Advertisements*, he explores what it means to be men and women, and how media presents these ideas to the consumer. According to

Goffman, the foundation of masculinity and femininity is taught through pictures. The individuals assessing these pictures must be willing participants to mimic the images, believing that this is the correct portrayal of gender. He furthers the argument that there is no gender, but rather a presentation of gender.

What the human nature of males and females really consists of, then, is a capacity to learn to provide and to read depictions of masculinity and femininity and a willingness to adhere to a schedule for presenting these pictures, and this capacity they have by virtue of being persons, not females or males. One might just as well say there is no gender identity. There is only a schedule for portrayal of gender (Goffman, 1979, p. 8).

In Goffman's latter work, he questions the strict constructs of gender representation. By taking a narrative approach, Goffman looks at how advertisements "tell a story" of gender. More so, the images of masculinity and femininity become social cues of how one should behave and act according to one's gender. By implementing Goffman's work, underlining themes of subordination and domination begin to surface and reveal the roles of gender representation according to the conviction of society.

A sociologist from the University of Chicago, Goffman's work has been called everything from trivial and marginal to the "Kafka of our times" (Williams, 1986, p. 356). While some feminist scholars believe that Goffman is furthering the belief in the rape myth (Wedel, 1978) others believe his concepts of reality are illusive and blurred (Denzin & Keller, 1981). Rejected by his peers, but welcomed by others, Goffman is making a comeback with the younger generation of scholars (Williams, 1986). Goffman has created a way for the subtle cues of gender displays to be accounted and defined. His work has branched into many areas of research, such as anthropology, communication, philosophy and modern sociology (Williams, 1986; Manning, 1992; Collins, 1986; Bock, 1988).



Goffman's *Gender Advertisements* (1979) describes several ideas of how gender is presented. Gender is a culturally defined describing what established concepts of what it means to be male and female. Goffman argues that gender displays describes how each sex portrays these correlations. Goffman refers to these displays as "expressive behavior," and they are expressed and received as natural. These displays come from behavioral styles – coding – that indicate certain ways of acting in different social situations for each sex. Goffman wanted to highlight the modes of handling each self in a way that is acceptable to the greater society. To do this, he establishes the idea of picture frames. These frames can be divided into two classes: private and public. Private pictures are for intimate circles of friends who can be taken to celebrate an occasion, achievements, turning points in one's life, and so on. Public pictures are designed to catch a wider audience that is unconnected to others in a social relationship. These pictures or advertisements can inform the readers about current or new ideas about political, social and scientific concerns. These advertisements can have the sense of what is socially "real," and the reader is encouraged to engage in a "make-believe" world and treating it as such, even if it is not (p. 15).

Goffman (1979) gives four situations of contrived and uncontrived advertisement pictures. First, pictures are put together a world in which the real situation could not be produced. Second, the individual in the picture must appear to be natural. The direction and mobility of the eye gaze, head direction and the body all appear to be realistic. Space representation of a group of individuals to a single person incorporate and the scene they are located in is the third situation of advertisements. This explores the reconstruction of space from different angles of selected pictures, whether it is from the side or from the front. Finally, these advertisements can depict ordinary life with high symbolism. What this incorporates is seeing the

whole body not as a person, but rather as anatomy, such as a navel. All four of these categories, Goffman argues, are represented in today's advertisements. To understand and assess all four categories, six rubrics titled "gender displays" were created: relative size, the feminine touch, function raking, family, ritualization of subordination and licensed withdrawal. This study will incorporate four "gender displays," "family" and "function" ranking will be excluded because there are not a significant number of covers that present a man and women in an executive role, or in a family setting.

This research conceptually defined gender as any socially constructed category of sexual identification, more specifically male or female. Goffman (1979) and Wood (2004) indicate that one is not born with these constructions, but rather through society they begin to identify these defined representations. Gender displays encompass what actions are being presented that categorizes the representation. This will done by using four of Goffman's (1979) rubrics: relative size, feminine touch, ritualization of subordination and licensed withdrawal. Kang (1997) implemented Goffman's "gender display" rubrics when assessing women's roles in advertisements from 1964 to 1994. She added the rubric of "body displays" to indicate the change of women's sexualized image. This study added Kang's body displays.

There are two reasons for the subtraction of Goffman's family gender display and the addition of Kang's. First, magazine covers – not advertisements – are being studied. The rubrics were developed for advertisements and the two discarded rubrics are unsuitable for this study. Second, this longitudinal study will uncover different variables over time, requiring additions in the measurements to help understand these changes. Goffman's rubrics, even though they have credibility in this field of research and have been used with many studies, do not represent all that is portrayed in today's media. This time gap will be filled by the additions of body displays.

Following are the operational definitions and listing of the variables and indicators that were the measurements for the study. The attributes for each of the dichotomous variables had a coding scheme of 1 for a “yes” if it is present or 0 for “no” if it is not present:

### **Relative size**

This is used to determine who is taller between men and women, which indicates whom exudes power over the other. It represents status, power, rank, social weight and authority, Goffman argues that this can be a biological selection process in which a man will select a shorter woman to ensure a power difference. If there is an instance when a woman is taller, it is because of social class – a servant or butler. This will be coded if the male is taller.

### **Feminine touch**

Is represented when an individual is using her fingers or hands to touch, outline, cradle or caress in an unnatural way. Women using facial distance can also indicate it and self-touch (e.g., hair, face, lips) an example of this is three women having their faces touching cheek to cheek. One should not confuse this type of ritualistic touching which needs to be distinguished from the utilitarian kind, which is grasping, manipulating, or holding. This gender display will be coded by the following indicators: cradling an object, outlining an object, caressing an object, touching an object, touching self and close up of group.

### **Ritualization of subordination**

By one holding him/ herself as erect, it personifies the individual as confident and unashamed. However, if the individual physically lowers him/ herself, not holding a

correct posture, lying or sitting down on the ground, bed or sofa, it gives the appearance of one being subordinate. This does not have to specifically take place in front of another person and also includes an individual being dependent on another for support: leaning on a shoulder or arm, an arm around the individual inhibiting movements, or when a subordinate will lower oneself in the presence of another, signifying appeasement and submissiveness. The individual in the picture can present carefree and silly movements that can be represented by the body as clowning around or being playful. This represents that the individual cannot take care of oneself. A man and woman in play can signify a woman as being childish and represents a mock child play, such as a father and daughter playing together, which again, gives the impression a woman is child-like. If one's arms are extended, around another's shoulder or locked together, it signifies that one has social priority over the other. The variables that will be coded are: woman physically lower, bashful knee, cant body, cant head, sitting/ lying on bed/ sofa/ ground, leaning on man/ shoulder for support, arm around her inhibiting movement, body clowning, women mock child play and extended arm for social priority.

### **Licensed withdrawal**

This is represented when the characters are mentally and/or physically withdrawn from a particular social involvement in which they feel uncomfortable. The person then gives the appearance of being disoriented and dependent on the protectiveness of another, and this can be seen as an unrestrained smile or laughter, covering the face or mouth, or withdrawing her gaze from the larger scene. This will be coded with the following variables: unrestrained smile/ laughter, covering face or mouth, withdrawing gaze, head/ eye gaze, finger(s) touching or in mouth, finger to finger, bending of the legs.

### **Body displays**

This is seen when the woman is wearing revealing, sheer, hardly any or no clothes. This increases the association of sexualized images of women and includes revealing clothing such as mini-skirts, “short” shorts, “see-through” cloths, halter tops, bathing suit and/ or close up shots in which the shoulders of the women are bare (i.e., Kang, 1997, p. 985 for a discussion). Sheer clothing, bathing suit, halter tops/ bikini tops, close ups with bare shoulders, revealing shoulders, revealing cleavage, revealing stomachs, revealing buttocks, revealing top of thigh down the leg, lingerie and complete nudity will be coded for body display. If the woman is nude, all the body parts being revealed will be coded (ex, navel, shoulders, stomach, etc.).

Only the manifest meanings were coded, decreasing the subjectivity of the research; it will either be present or not. The coding outcome created the latent meaning of the cover’s representation of gender.

## CHAPTER 6

### RESULTS

For this analysis a random sample of *Rolling Stone* covers (N = 275) were coded. The units of analysis were individual characters on the cover, which totaled N = 396. Forty-two variables from Goffman's gender display and from Kang's body display were individually coded for the variables attributes. In all, 12 covers did not contain human characters. For example, one cover was a drawing for "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" and another cover was the American flag with 9/11/01 printed across. These covers were still coded because they represented what *Rolling Stone* portrayed on the cover, but did not fulfill the variables from Goffman and Kang. If a drawing was of an individual, such as Jerry Garcia or Crosby, Stills, and Nash, and maintained human characteristics, it was coded for appropriately.

There was one issue where all five members of \*NSync had an individual cover and then a cover of the whole group; six covers for the same issue. The cover that had every member was the one selected for coding. This was done because the individual covers only consisted of headshots, while the whole band photo had the entire body of each band member.

Five coders were trained for the research without revealing the three hypotheses and three research questions. All values noted are Krippendorff's Alpha, unless marked otherwise. For some measurements, there was no variance due to the dichotomous variables as such percent agreement was used. When variance occurred, or when calculable, alpha was used for the intercoder reliability: number of people, 100%; male, 1.0; female, .89; ethnicity, .88; cartoon, 1.0; individual, .64; male taller, .95; cradling object, 1.0; outlining object, 1.0; caressing object, 1.0; touching object, 1.0; self touch, 1.0; close-up of group, 1.0; physically lower, 1.0; bashful knee, .73; cant body, .81; cant head, 92%; sitting, 1.0; leaning on a man, 1.0; arm around, 1.0;

body clowning, 96%; mock child play, 92%; extended arm, 1.0; unrestrained smile, .75; covering face or mouth, 96%; withdrawing gaze, 1.0; head and eye gaze, 94%; fingers touching or in mouth, 1.0; finger to finger, 98%; bending of the legs, .67; sheer clothing, 1.0; bathing suit, 1.0; halter top or bikini, .77; lingerie, .86; close up with shoulders, 98%; shoulders, .98; cleavage, .85; navel, .86; buttocks, 1.0; thigh, .81; nude, 1.0.

This study supported results from Sullivan and O'Conner (1988) and Iijima Hall and Crum (1994) in finding that men appear more often than women. Although their work explored advertising specifically, the findings from *Rolling Stone* suggested a consistent pattern. From this sampling, 300 men and 88 women were coded. Out of the 275 coded, 49 covers had both men and women present.

Hypothesis one predicted an increase in licensed withdrawal and body display for women throughout the magazine's publication. A pair of partial correlation statistics were used to test the relationship between licensed withdrawal and the year of publication controlling for body displays. The second partial correlation tested the relationship between body displays and year of publication controlling for licensed withdrawal. Both of these variables did increase for women on the cover of *Rolling Stone*, which lends support for Kang's 1997 study. Her study encompassed thirty years of women in advertising and this study examined more than thirty years of *Rolling Stone*, and the results are similar. This only furthers the argument that women are continually portrayed in a stereotypical manner. By controlling for each independent variable, the first graph in Table 1 indicates for both cover types there has been a weak correlation increase of body displays and a weak correlation decrease over the course of the publication regarding licensed withdrawal on the cover of the publication with both men and women (1A).

However, the second table shows only covers with women (1B). Consistent with Kang's 1997 study, both increased over time, however, at a weak to moderate correlation strength: licensed withdrawal ( $r = .19$  at  $p < .001$ ) and body displays at ( $r = .50$  at  $p < .001$ ). Licensed withdrawal indicated a weak correlation, but one still to consider. Body displays had a moderate correlation, which indicates a moderate change in representation of women and men over time. Figure 1 gives a visual reference of licensed withdrawal for men and women individually or together over time while figure 2 represents men and women body displays over time. This data suggests present-day images of women are now being presented as highly sexualized. Over time men's indicators of license withdrawal presented a liner representation, while women had a large increase in the '70s, which was during the women's movement (Figure 1). With indicators of body displays, men's mean scores have slightly increased over time, but women's body displays mean scores took a drastic increase in the '90s and remained high in to the millennium (Figure 2).

In order to assess whether this is a women's issue on the cover or if there was a prevailing issue for both genders, men were also coded. The third graph in Table 1 (1C) indicates men on the cover decreased in both licensed withdrawal and body display (1C), signifying that this is an issue that women are having to face alone, given the male presentation of body displays moderately decreased over time ( $r = -.49$  at  $p < .05$ ), while women's displays moderately increased over time ( $r = .50$  at  $p < .05$ ).



**TABLE 1**

**1A:**

**PARTIAL CORRELATION BETWEEN BODY DISPLAYS AND LICENSED WITHDRAWAL BY YEAR OF PUBLICATION**

Variable	Year	Sig.
Body Displays*	.291	.001
Licensed Withdrawal**	-.158	.002

(N=383)

\* correlation between year and body displays controlling for licensed withdrawal

\*\* correlation between year and licensed withdrawal controlling for body displays

**1B:**

**PARTIAL CORRELATION BETWEEN BODY DISPLAYS AND LICENSED WITHDRAWAL BY YEAR OF PUBLICATION FOR WOMEN ONLY**

Variable	Year	Sig.
Body Displays*	.501	.001
Licensed Withdrawal**	.196	.001

(n=86)

\* correlation between year and body displays controlling for licensed withdrawal

\*\* correlation between year and licensed withdrawal controlling for body displays

1C:

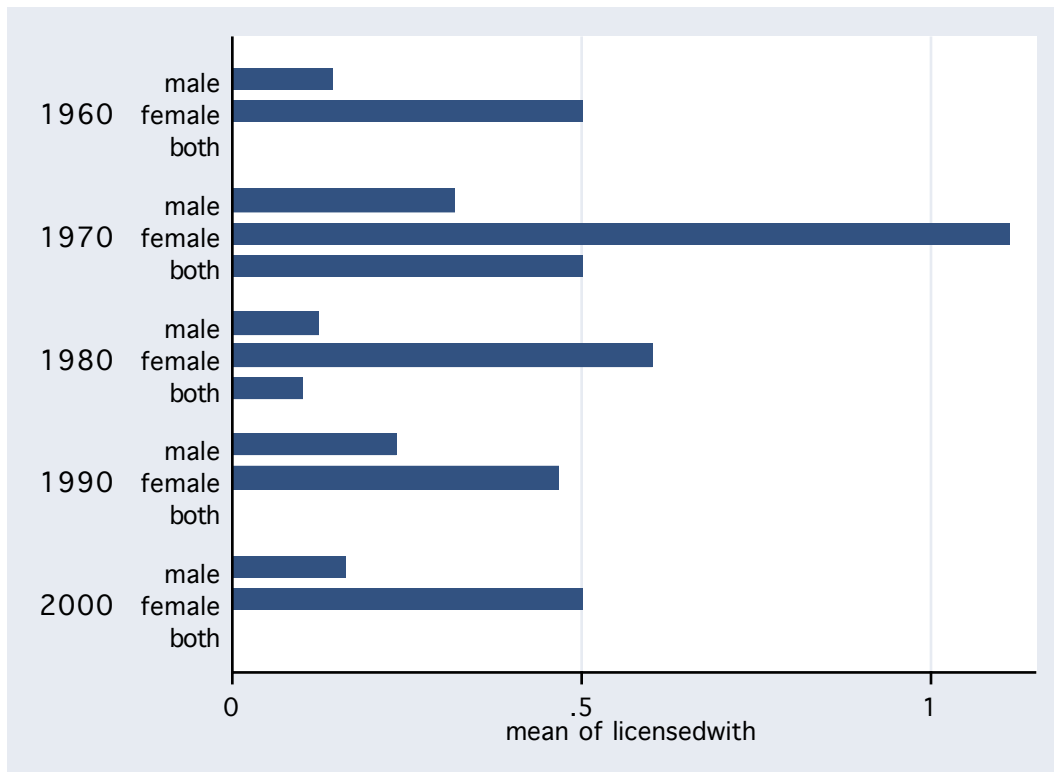
**PARTIAL CORRELATION BETWEEN BODY DISPLAYS AND LICENSED  
WITHDRAWAL BY YEAR OF PUBLICATION FOR MEN ONLY**

Variable	Year	Sig.
Body Displays*	-.49	.001
Licensed Withdrawal**	-.192	.001

(n=267)

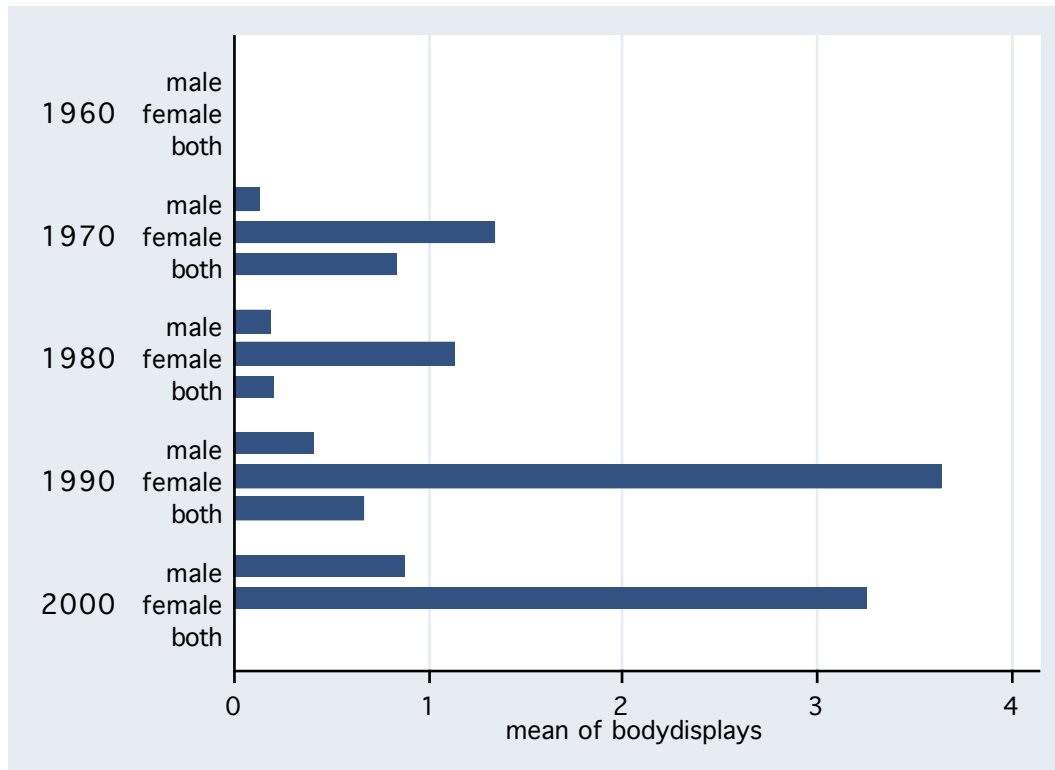
\* correlation between year and body displays controlling for licensed withdrawal

\*\* correlation between year and licensed withdrawal controlling for body displays



Men (N=267)      Women (N=65)      Both (N= 49)

**Figure 1. Mean scores of cover types for licensed withdrawal over time by cover type.**



Men (N=267)

Women (N=65)

Both (N= 49)

**Figure 2. Mean scores of cover types for body displays over time by cover type.**

Hypothesis two was tested using a one-way ANOVA with post-hoc tests between categories using Bonferroni correction. The one-way ANOVA revealed significant difference between cover types for how gender was represented on the covers (Table 2).

Overall, mean scores for covers with men only were lower than covers with women only for all of the display indicators. First, feminine touch was calculated and the results indicated that there was a change for this variable ( $f = 4.83$  at  $p < .002$ ). The post hoc comparison indicated significant mean differences between covers depicting men only with both men and women or those with women only. In both cases men are less likely to engage in “feminine touch” when there is only men on the cover. Interestingly,

there is no mean difference for women engaging in “feminine touch” when alone or accompanied by men. Ritualization of subordination ( $f = 25.20$  at  $p < .001$ ) mean scores indicted the same pattern between men and women with men scoring lowest and not having an affect on how women were presented with ritualization of subordination.

Yet, the pattern changed with the last two displays. Both licensed withdrawal ( $f = 8.34$  at  $p > .001$ ) and body displays ( $f = 55.77$  at  $p > .001$ ) revealed the same pattern related to cover types. Even though men’s mean scores where still the lowest, for licensed withdrawal and body displays suggests women’s presentation did in fact change when presented alone versus when presented with men. However, men’s means scores specify no significant difference (please reference Table 2).

The most significant difference between cover types was in the category of body displays. One can assume when women are by themselves, they present more indicators of body displays such as exposing cleavage, the navel, or buttocks. However, when in the presences of a man, a woman tends to be more clothed. Not only is she more clothed, but she also displays less licensed withdrawal, indicating that with a man she is now able to maintain control of her surroundings.

For the man, however, the opposite is true. While women represented a statistical difference in terms of licensed withdrawal and body displays, men showed a difference in feminine touch and ritualization of subordination. In summary, women’s representation on the cover of *Rolling Stone* is not affected with feminine touch and ritualization of subordination, but women’s representation is effected with licensed withdrawal and body displays.

**TABLE 2****GENDER DISPLAYS AND BODY DISPLAYS FOR MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTERS SEPARATELY AND IN THE PRESENCE OF THE OPPOSITE SEX**

	Both (N=49)	Male (N=267)	Female (N=65)	F-value
Feminine	.571 <sup>a</sup>	.312 <sup>b</sup>	.553 <sup>a</sup>	4.83 at .002
Touch	(.677)	(.525)	(.771)	
Ritualization of	1.244 <sup>a</sup>	.441 <sup>b</sup>	1.515 <sup>a</sup>	25.20 at .001
Subordination	(1.233)	(.750)	(1.553)	
Licensed	.306 <sup>a</sup>	.202 <sup>a</sup>	.593 <sup>b</sup>	8.34 at .001
Withdrawal	(.652)	(.479)	(.791)	
Body Displays	.591 <sup>a</sup>	.318 <sup>a</sup>	2.562 <sup>b</sup>	55.77 at .001
	(1.15)	(.937)	(2.15)	

Note. A one-way ANOVA with a Bonferroni correction for the post hoc test was used to compare the mean. Different superscript indicate statistically significant differences at  $p < .05$ .

Hypothesis three predicted a low level of correlation for gender displays by time, while predicting body display would increase significantly. Pearson's correlations were conducted to test the relationship between time and both gender and body displays with the hypothesis being supported (Table 3). It was discovered that women's gender displays remained consistent over the past 30 years with no significant relationship

between year and gender displays represented. Following Kang's 1997 study, the data suggested that body displays did significantly increase over time of the publication for women ( $r = .53, p < .001$ ). One interesting finding was, most of the time, the women were conducting more than one gender display or body display. For example, if a woman was presenting a licensed withdrawal, which is when she is mentally taking herself out of the situation, she was also exhibiting ritualization of subordination, as seen when she is physically lowering herself ( $r = .40$  at  $p < .001$ ). To conclude, if a woman shows one gender display, it is likely that she is representing another only furthering the stereotypical image of women. This furthers the argument that a woman is unable to conduct and take care of herself. If by herself, she is inadequate to handle adult situations and needs a male present to handle them for her.

**TABLE 3**

**PEARSON'S CORRELATION WITH WOMEN ONLY COVER TYPES OVER TIME**

	Year	Female	Male Taller	Feminine Touch	Ritualization of Subordination	Licensed Withdrawal	Body Displays
Year	1.0000						
Female	0.0334 <i>0.5142</i>	1.0000					
Male Taller	-0.0723 <i>0.1578</i>	-0.0897 <i>0.0796</i>	1.0000				
Feminine Touch	-0.0132 <i>0.7974</i>	0.2008 <i>0.0001</i>	0.0351 <i>0.4940</i>	1.0000			
Ritualization of Subordination	0.0063 <i>0.9028</i>	0.4554 <i>0.0000</i>	0.0272 <i>0.5959</i>	0.1185 <i>0.0207</i>	1.0000		
Licensed Withdrawal	-0.0884 <i>0.0844</i>	0.2807 <i>0.0000</i>	-0.0629 <i>0.2198</i>	0.0078 <i>0.8799</i>	0.4015 <i>0.0000</i>	1.0000	
Body Displays	0.2693 <i>0.0000</i>	0.5359 <i>0.0000</i>	-0.0426 <i>0.4059</i>	0.2284 <i>0.0000</i>	0.3283 <i>0.0000</i>	0.2144 <i>0.0000</i>	1.0000

Further, a frequency table was run comparing representation of body displays for women only covers to men only covers. By tabulating the frequency of each indicator it was discovered that not only is a woman displaying one body display, she was often coded for several different indicators (please reference Table 4). Six women on the cover presented seven body displays, which is the highest amount of indicators an individual could show. However, 27% of women indicated no forms of body displays or where she was exposing no skin. Compared to women, 84% percent of men showed no body displays and less than 14% presented one to five different



indicators. This research represents the significant number of women presenting these sexualized images, which largely surpasses that number of indicators compared to men. Also, if the male was presenting two to three indicators with body displays, it was typically a male wearing no shirt and revealing his chest, shoulders and navel.

**TABLE 4**  
**NUMBER OF INDICATORS OF BODY DISPLAYS PRESENT FOR MALE AND FEMALE ONLY COVERS**

Body Displays	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Female	24	14	17	9	5	7	3	6
%	27%	15%	19%	10%	5%	8%	3%	7%
(N = 88)								
Male	251	19	14	6	4	2	0	0
%	84%	6%	4%	2%	1%	.6%	0	0
(N = 296)								

Due to the lack of male research with gender roles and body displays, the first research question asked if there would be any significant change in these two dimensions. All the rubrics from Goffman and Kang remained fairly low for men over time (5A). By conducting a Pearson's Correlation of gender displays and body displays over time, men did not have any significant

change in these two dimensions. Men only had low to moderate correlation statistics and all having a negative relationship.

Interestingly, when a man presented a feminine gender quality, he was typically coded with more than one. For example, if a man was coded for licensed withdrawal, he was also coded for displaying feminine touch ( $r = .99, p < .001$ ) of the time. Another example would be ritualization of subordination and body displays ( $r = .99, p < .001$ . Please refer to Table 5B).

**TABLE 5**

**5A:  
PEARSON'S CORRELATION OF GENDER AND BODY DISPLAYS COMPARING  
FEMALE, MALE AND BOTH GENDERS OVER TIME**

	Cover Types Across Time		
	Both	Female	Male
All/ Female/ Male	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Feminine Touch	0.1805 <i>0.0004</i>	.2008 <i>0.0001</i>	-0.1960 <i>0.0001</i>
Ritualization of Subordination	0.3474 <i>0.0001</i>	.4554 <i>0.0001</i>	-0.4493 <i>0.0001</i>
Licensed Withdrawal	0.1444 <i>0.0047</i>	0.2807 <i>0.0001</i>	-0.2765 <i>0.00001</i>
Body Displays	0.2579 <i>0.0001</i>	0.5359 <i>0.0001</i>	-0.5306 <i>0.00001</i>

**5B:  
PEARSON'S CORRELATION FOR GENDER DISPLAYS AND BODY DISPLAYS BY  
COVER TYPE (MEN, WOMEN AND BOTH)**

		Feminine Touch	Ritualization of Subordination	Licensed Withdrawal	Body Display
Feminine Touch		1.0			
Ritualization of Subordination	♂	.99*	1.0		
	♀	.98*			
	B	.27**			
Licensed Withdrawal	♂	.99*	.99*	1.0	
	♀	.98*	.99*		
	B	.06 <sup>NS</sup>	.50*		
Body Displays	♂	.99*	.99*	.99*	1.0
	♀	.98*	.98*	.98*	
	B	-.01 <sup>NS</sup>	.32**	.47*	

\* = p < .001  
♂ = male only

\*\* = p < .05  
♀ = female only

ns = not significant  
B = both sexes on cover

Due to the weak relationship of gender displays with men, the next question is the frequency of the gender displays and body displays. After tabulating the frequency, the answer would indicate that even though the first test showed men remaining constant or having these rubrics increase they were not presented often. For example, 19 covers presented men with one variable of body displays, 14 showed men with two body display variables and only 12 more men on the cover showed three to five variables for body displays (Table 4). Please see Table 6

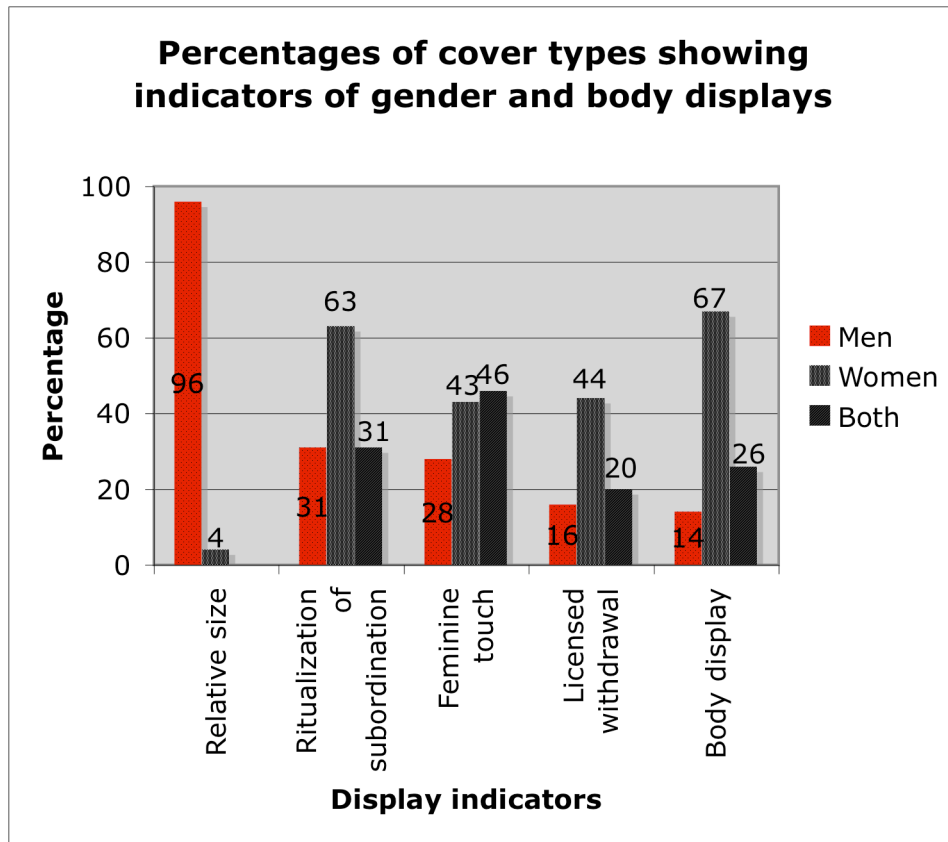
for all the gender displays and the number of times presented. This table presents the amount of times men present these gender displays and body displays, with most not presenting any.

**TABLE 6**  
**FREQUENCY OF MEN’S GENDER DISPLAYS**

Indicators	Feminine Touch.	Ritualization of Subordination	Licensed Withdrawal
0	208	199	249
1	78	66	36
2	9	23	11
3	0	8	0
4	NA	0	NA
5	NA	0	NA

Research question two asked if both men’s and women’s portrayals of sexuality increased over time. For this question, sexuality was coded by what body displays were present on the cover for both sexes. Women’s body displays increased ( $r = .53$  at  $p < .001$ ) and men’s displays have decreased ( $r = -.53$  at  $p < .001$ ) (Please see Table E1). As a whole, body displays increased on the publication ( $r = .26$  at  $p < .001$ ), indicating that this is socially acceptable, but more socially acceptable for women ( $r = .53$  at  $p < .001$ ). One must remember that there were only 88 women coded for *Rolling Stone* and 61 of the women were coded for one or more body displays

while only 45 men out of 296 were coded for body displays. That is 69% of women and only 15% of men displayed forms of sexuality. Also, returning to Table 4, one can see that only 12 men presented more than three to five different body displays, while 30 individual women presented 3 to 7 different forms of body display per cover (see also Figure 3).



**Figure 3. Percentages of gender and body displays by cover types.**

The final question looked at gender displays and body displays of both sexes to see if there is a change in either dimension if the opposite sex is present. There is a relatively small yet significant increase with gender presences on the cover of *Rolling Stone*. By calculating both

sexes, feminine touch ( $r = .18$  at  $p < .001$ ) and licensed withdrawal ( $r = .14$  at  $p < .004$ ) indicated a weak correlation, while ritualization of subordination ( $r = .34$  at  $p < .001$ ) and body displays ( $r = .25$  at  $p < .001$ ) have a low correlation. This suggests that there is no type of correlation with gender displays, but when both men and women are on the cover together, there less gender displays and body displays being presented almost indicating a sense of equality when both are present. However, the correlations drastically change and there is a much larger gap between men and women when each are presented separately. Women's ritualization increased ( $r = .45$  at  $p < .001$ ) over time while men's decreased ( $r = -.44$  at  $p < .001$ ), indicating that the increase when both sexes were present was due to part of the women's scores.

The ANOVA conducted in hypothesis two indicated that women's mean gender and body display scores decrease for both licensed withdrawal and body displays when in the presence of men. The data represents a change of gender displays when the opposite sex is presence for women and men. This reinforces the notion that when a man is on the cover of *Rolling Stone* with a woman, the man will present more indicators in these two variables while women remain consistent, which, in turn, the man will present more female characteristics than when he is by himself.

This research indicates women remained fairly consistent with gender displays over time while body displays significantly increased. Men seemed to represent a reduction of gender and body displays throughout the publication. The first hypothesis was supported for women's licensed withdrawal and body displays. For the second hypothesis, it was not supported as women's gender display shifted in licensed withdrawal and body displays in male presence, but remained consistent in Feminine touch and ritualization of subordination. The data supported the

third hypothesis; women's gender displays remained consistent over time, while body displays drastically increased.

The first research question indicated that men's gender and body displays presented no significant change over the publication, but when the male presented one display, he typically presented another form of a gender display. However, the frequencies of these displays were minimal. Research question two found that sexuality increased with women and decreased for men. The third research question represented a change in gender displays when the opposite sex was present, but in different displays. Women's representation differed in licensed withdrawal and body displays, and men's fluctuated in feminine touch and ritualization of subordination. This data indicates the slow process media takes to change gender representation for both men and women, but how different men and women are presented when they are alone or in the presences of the opposite sex. With the advances for women, one would think the images presented would decrease over the years of publication.

## CHAPTER 7

### DISSCUSSION

Wood's (2003) research discovered three common threads in media, which were also prevalent in *Rolling Stone*. First, according to Wood, white males are the cultural norm while women and minorities are represented as unimportant or invisible. This is seen in *Rolling Stone* by the amount of men represented on the cover of the publication. Only 88 women were selected from a random sampling over the 37-year period, which is only 22% out of the total number of individuals coded, had women on the cover. Also, men's gender displays and body displays mostly decreased throughout the publication while the opposite was seen for women.

The second common theme Wood discovered was that media representation of men and women emphasized already stereotypical ideas of gender. Unfortunately, this was the case with *Rolling Stone*. However, the huge increase of body display is an indicator that our society is being cultivated to sexual images. This cultivated effect has created the idea that sexually explicit covers are socially acceptable, but mostly for women. Men's body displays decreased ( $r = -.53$  at  $p < .001$ ) while women's increased by ( $r = .53$  at  $p < .001$ ).

Adding a qualitative aspect to this research, an explanation for the decrease with men's body displays was due in part of several issues. One of the few covers in which men displayed a sexualized image was David Cassidy. RS 108 displayed Cassidy on the ground, indicating a completely nude image of the singer stretched on the cover from head to exposing a small portion of pubic hair. Cassidy explained he did this cover to counteract the "innocent" image he gained with the Partridge Family. However, he had to explain to many fans when they wrote to him claiming he was brainwashed into doing such a cover (Wenner, 1998). After the event, he confessed to *Rolling Stone*,



It pissed off everybody that was really profiting from the business of David Cassidy. I had fan letters that came to me – and there were hundreds of thousands of them, literally – in defense of me by fans of mine, that said, ‘Oh David, I know that you couldn’t possibly have done this because I know that you would never have posed nude for photographs.’ And the fact was, I had, had willingly done so, had thought about it. I scratched my head and thought, you know, this David Cassidy business has really gotten outta hand (Wenner, 1998, p. 44).

Wood’s final common thread of media dealt with the idea that the traditional representation of men and women only emphasizes the unequal power balance between the sexes. This can be seen from the unbalanced number of men and women on the cover, the gap between the gender and body displays data, and how these gender and body displays differ when both sexes are present. It is discouraging coming from a magazine that is preserved as a cultural icon, revolutionary and cutting edge.

Interestingly, during presidential election years, women on the cover drastically decrease and no political woman in office has ever been on the cover of *Rolling Stone*. In the 2004 election year, only two women were on the cover. This is a consistent pattern of the publication in election years. With a lack of political women on the cover and not one woman who holds a political position, furthers the difficulty women have holding political offices. This indicates that women are not only having difficulty in the music industries, but also in the political realm. Due to the lack of representation, women have to overcome the barrier that media creates.

Three theories were discussed in Chapter 3 that impacts this study: cultivation theory, media priming, and uses and gratifications. All three play a significant role in how society views gender representation. Most importantly, *Rolling Stone* plays a role in expanding all three theories.

First, cultivation theory would indicate *Rolling Stone* is a part of the larger issue of mass media’s construction of gender roles and identity. Cultivation theory, dealing with television,

does not assess one television show, but rather a multitude of shows and the effect of the medium. To apply this theory to media priming, cultivation theory assesses not one publication, but how most publications and advertisements together portray gender roles.

From television to print media, these images cultivate a homogeneous perception of male and female gender roles. *Rolling Stone* cannot do this alone, but it is an element of this greater media realm, helping to generate these stereotypical images. Even though it is a fraction of what young adolescents are exposed to, it does further the notions of what standards men and women may be held up, to. The study's overall findings suggest that what is reflected on television is reflected in other mediated realms. With this argument, perhaps the effects of cultivation could include general forms of media as opposed to television alone.

Second, priming theory identifies what individuals are exposed to and establishes attitudes and beliefs that are acted upon in daily life. *Rolling Stone's* covers prime the users of gender representation and how each sex should behave. If media priming educates individuals on how to behave or react in everyday situations, this publication is only reinforcing stereotypical gender roles. Also, the overtly sexualized images and submissive images of women are harmful when they reinforce to the individual how these images are socially acceptable and the norm.

Finally, the theory of uses and gratification can be seen through the consumers of *Rolling Stone* anticipating this publication to meet an expected need. Whether it is information, knowledge or status of reading the publication, all serve a purpose with the magazine maintaining almost 16 million readers and holding a high ranked position among the top 500 magazines.

To incorporate all three theories, consumers use the publication for any type of need. As long as this need is met, they will continue using *Rolling Stone*. However, at the same time, they

are being primed to believe that men and women should act and behave based upon the media's representation. These ideas are then reinforced and concreted by mimicking other publications. This issue will only be a cyclical issue and will never have resolution unless some changes in its portrayal of men and women are implemented.

From this study, four conclusions were found. First, men by themselves had low correlations to the indicators from Goffman and Kang, which was the opposite for women. This could suggest a difference in the way gender is represented. Second, when men were on the cover with women, there was a shift in the way men were presented in feminine touch and ritualization of subordination. Third, when women were on the cover by themselves, they presented a child-like attitude and were highly sexualized, which were indicated with the shift in license withdrawal and body displays. Fourth, due to the shift in license withdrawal and body displays, when women were presented with men, they demonstrated more control over themselves and the situation, and were more clothed when in the presence of men rather than by themselves.

Throughout the years, these images of women have remained fairly consistent with gender displays, but dramatically increased in body displays. This is surprising and disturbing, for one would think that these images would have decreased due to the women's movement and the push for equality of women in the business world. Yet with these consistent images, women will constantly evaluate who they are and who they want to become. If Goffman's assessment in *Gendered Advertisements* is correct in stating magazines help define what it is to be male and female, this is incredibly frightening. Gender representation for women in society must be overtly sexualized according to this research. On the cover are women who have recognition and

power in the music and entertainment industry. Instead of empowering other women, they construct these unrealistic realities of what it means to be a woman.

For women, these findings representing stereotypical images on the covers of *Rolling Stone* can have immense social repercussions. Research suggests that media impact our society's expectations, opinions and attitudes, and furthers the audience's expectation of reality. Equality is a topic that all need to strive for. If we as a society are exposed to these images that depict women in stereotypical roles that degrade them, this will have a huge repercussion. Even though there were a few covers that portrayed women with a guitar or singing, the number did not even outweigh the covers that stereotyped women. These representations of women need to tread lightly, because "...these images are associated with the way women are treated, looked upon, and feel about themselves, with the kind of behavior and appearance that is expected from them..." (Lindner, 2004, p. 419). Beauty is culturally constructed in society (Englis, Solomon, & Ashmore, 1994), and we need to be cautious about the images that are produced. With these images from *Rolling Stone*, a woman's beauty is submissive, young and overtly sexualized.

Many women in the industry have felt the pressure to become overtly sexualized to gain attention in the industry. Lady Saw, a Jamaican rapper, states, "It took me the X-rated thing to get noticed" (Daily News, Sept. 3, 2004). Also, women are still backup singers for men in the industry (Belfast Telegraph, November, 19, 2004). With images of women on the cover of the industry's most highly regarded magazine, these stereotypes will further perpetuate the difficulty women experience to be recognized and respected.

Some images were discovered that surpassed the rubrics and need to be taken into consideration for future research, which many consist of sexualized images that increased in the '90s. Some of these images consisted of women with their mouths open, contorted bodies in a

sexualized pose, legs spread, or clothing falling or being stripped off. When asked about *Rolling Stone*'s sexual portrayal of women, Jann Wenner states, "I think the criticism is bullshit. I laugh at that criticism. Is a sexy woman on the cover any more sexist than the Justin Timberlake cover by Herb Ritts? They are both sexy. Some of the men are scantily clad, too" (Hay, 2004, p. 86).

Some covers portraying men did not fit clearly into Goffman's and Kang's rubrics. However, Robert Brannon's timeless (1985) essay created four major themes of traditional masculinity that help explain the male representation presented on *Rolling Stone* covers. *The Masculine Self* by Christopher Kilmartin (1999) furthers these themes by renaming and expanding the explanation. Brannon's titles are presented in this discussion:

### **No Sissy Stuff**

Female feelings, traits, personality, interests and emotions are not accepted in the male realm. From birth, men are discouraged to display any "feminine behaviors." Kilmartin claims "Mainstream U.S. culture includes a view of women as gentle, sensual, tender, submissive, passive, relationship-oriented, and sexually desirous toward expressing his sexuality with the opposite of these qualities" (1999, p. 213-214). This was witnessed in several covers but the most obvious was seen with Billy Idol on RS 440. He is pictured with balled fists and a grime expression on his face. However, he is only wearing a black Speedo with two belts, six necklaces and a black glove. This leaves the impression of sexual aggression. RS 546, with Sam Kinison with fists in a fighting position and a screaming facial expression.

### **The Big Wheel**

This description is seen when men are presented in a power status that represents success, leadership and respect from others. Men gain this status by being successful in what they do,

whether it is music, politics, movie, television or sports. Kilmartin states this is an outcome of success and not a process (1999, p. 215).

This is presented in *Rolling Stone* by the number of men on the covers compared to the few women. More than two-thirds of the covers have men on the cover and are all men who are successful in all realms of careers. Political leaders such as Jimmy Carter, Al Gore, Bill Clinton, Howard Dean and John Kerry have had *Rolling Stone* covers. Even Jack Ford was covered (RS 218) in 1976, defending why he still lived with his parents in the White House. The only woman on the cover was in 1977. Andy Warhol created a portrait of Bella Abzug, a mayoral primary candidate for New York City. She lost to Ed Koch.

The lack of women representation is a prevailing theme in all categories: sports, film, television, and mostly the music industry. It is also seen in the presentation of men and women. If one skims through any year, two themes are present. Men are presented with headshots and women's bodies are on the cover. Archer, Kimes, and Barrios (1978) coined this as "face-ism," arguing the degree to which men are focused with the faces. A study by Hall and Crum (1994) explored "body-ism", which indicated the camera shot of the female body and/or focusing on body parts. "Face-ism" and "body-ism" is a prevailing theme throughout the full publication of gender representation on *Rolling Stone*.

### **The Sturdy Oak**

Men must maintain emotional composure and self-control at all times, even in the most difficult situations. The perception of independence and expressionless is upheld and strived for with no display of weakness. The depiction of men in *Rolling Stone* is seen time and time with this theme. Again, going back to the "face-ism" discussion, men are mostly pictured with a close-up of their face and few men have a smile. Furthermore, if a man is pictured with a

woman, she is leaning or hanging on the man for support. If she is not leaning or hanging, she is bending over, lowering herself, indicating a submissive role. If a whole band was presented on the cover, all of the men were separated and had distance between them, while women were hanging on each other or having arms around each other indicating support.

### **Give ‘Em Hell**

Physical risks and violence are male characteristics indicating masculinity. Men playing their musical instruments aggressively, being comedic or presenting a rowdy or obnoxious behavior presented this. If they were not seen in a headshot, they were taking one of these roles.

One significant finding was how the presentation of gender changed when the individual was alone versus presented with the opposite gender. Men indicated a shift in feminine touch and ritualization of subordination when women were present. This could suggest that men present more of these qualities only when women are present because doing these indicators when men are by themselves, is socially taboo. When women were on the cover with men, their shift was in licensed withdrawal and body displays. This could indicate that women can only present a sense of self-control when men are in attendance.

Women were coded for many of the indicators presented by Goffman and Kang. *Gender Advertisements* specifically addresses stereotypical female gender representation in advertisements, so it is not surprising that many of the variables were coded for women and not men. This illustrates women's representation in mass media, particularly in *Rolling Stone*, has not changed in close to forty years. Goffman suggests these images portray women as submissive, helpless, child-like and in need of a caretaker. If women are presented in this manner, this is how society could treat women and how women think they should behave. However men's representations have remained consistent and the results indicated a significantly

lower frequency and scores. Men presented a low frequency of each display indicator, which could suggest that men are presented as sturdy, responsible, aggressive and independent; the opposite of women's representation. One would believe the women's score would duplicate the men's score, representing a sign of equality. Unfortunately, this is not the case; women were significantly higher in the data results.

The most prevailing finding is the issue of body displays. Women's body displays significantly increased over time as men's decreased. The only time women's body display decreased was when she was on the cover with a man. This indicates that not only are women portrayed as incapable of handling themselves in situations, they are also displayed as sexual beings. The danger of having these two implications together is men can view woman as wanting to be sexually accepting. She presents herself as helpless and incapable of handling herself, but she is unclothed – this could be misunderstood as a willing woman for sexual advances. Also, these behaviors she is presenting are child-like indications. A woman is seen as an adolescent in need of guidance. The question must be asked. Is this the reason for the heightened fascination of pedophilia? Even though sex crimes had decreased, there still are 60,000 to 70,000 arrests each year with more than a half a million registered sex offenders (Kanka, 2005). Could our media be an indicator of this social problem? If these are the images plastered on magazine covers for all to see, and have been for many years, could this unconsciously signal to men that sex with young women is socially desirable and acceptable?

When a woman is present with a man, she is seen more clothed and more in control of her surroundings. This indicates the only way she can gain power and control is when she is in the presences of a man. According to these images, a young woman believes that she is capable of handling herself only when she has a significant other. One could argue that current media's



representation of women is more harmful than ever before. Not only has women's representation remained consistent over time; women now have to face the issues of body displays. Today, the media image of women is them presenting stereotypical images and exposing more skin.

One issue that must be considered is the target audience for this publication. As stated earlier, most of the readership is young men. Music is a major influence of today's adolescents. Listening to the music up to five hours a day (Brown, Childers, Bauman, & Koch, 1990), adolescents seek information about their musical idols. What they are exposed to in *Rolling Stone* are adult images produced for an adult audience. These images come at a time when adolescents are discovering their sense of self and how they should treat others. If this is the case, the images on this magazine further the stereotypical images of a strong man and the subordination of the female, who is under clothed. Unless these images change soon, this will only be a cyclical issue in our culture.

Also, these images are presented for all to see at any magazine stand and this magazine has been rooted in our culture. During the 2006 Olympics interview with snowboarding gold medalist Shaun White, or the "Flying Tomato," the newscaster asked him about his upcoming appearance on the *Rolling Stone* cover. He said it was an honor to be on the cover and he was excited. This publication has a thread in American pop culture and educates its readers on what is hip, cool, and politically correct. It stretches from beyond music to every realm of entertainment and every genre of music, reaching to our American culture.

Ethnicity was highly unrepresented on the cover of the publication, with less than 9% of the covers having a minority present. Out of the 380 recorded for ethnicity, 341 were Caucasian, 30 were African American, three were Asian, two were Latin American, and three were "other." However, this cannot be generalized because Yoko Ono was the only Asian on the cover, and

Jennifer Lopez and Ricky Martin were the two Latin Americans. This represents the extremely low representation of ethnicity, not only within the music industry as a whole, but the reflection it gives to our society.

One could argue that *Rolling Stone* is a rock genre magazine, but this is not completely true. In order to keep up with the changing and diverse music industry, it had to incorporate different genres into the publication. Plus, more people are broadening their music scope, listening to more than one genre of music. The top three music genres listened to by the American public: country, rock 'n' roll, and hip-hop/ urban (Zill and Robinson, 1994). *Rolling Stone* covers all three and pulls in the audience of all listening types.

The question then remains: are women knowing and willing to portray these images for power, and is this the only way for women to maintain power? Even though this study did not address how women in the industry internalize these images, I believe that women first thought that this was the way to get noticed in a male-dominated industry, but it has now backfired. It is expected and wanted, rather than power becoming a submissive act. Women have been presented incapable of handling situations for many years, but today they are represented as more sexual. The only time women are presented capable of handling themselves is when a man is present. These images, exposed to young adolescent girls to adult women, educate what it means to be a woman in our society. Women are told to be independent and self-sufficient, and then exposed to these propaganda images educating what is a supposed reflection of womanhood, only leaving a blurred depiction of what is expected and what is reality.

The strengths of this research is assessing men's gender roles in print media, using magazine covers, and evaluating *Rolling Stone* as a cultural icon. The weaknesses of this paper are using Goffman's rubrics that mainly identified women's gender traits. Much research needs

to be conducted about male gender representation and how both genders internalize these images. Another research interest is how these images of women affect men's sexual behavior, particularly with young women. *Tracks*, *Spin* and *Vibe* should also be studied dealing with gender representation.

Many questions still remain in the role of print media. However, one cannot disregard the impact it has in terms that it educates our society on gender representation. There must be a continuation of studying magazines covers, for this is the first exposure for the audience. What is on the cover of the magazine will further represent what it means to be a woman or a man within society and how we each should behave. If Josephson's 1987 media priming study was correct that priming could dissolve over time, what do we need to do as a society to make this happen in print media? However, if these priming images continually bombard an individual every day, it will never have the chance to dissolve. Such is the case with *Rolling Stone*; the images being primed will never have a chance to dissolve. With a new issue being released every two weeks, stereotypical representation of men and women will only further engrave these ideas into the 1.3 million subscribers and 16 million readers. This research could suggest one of two different scenarios of media: First, it could indicate how slow the media changes to keep up with society or second, it could imply that our society expects to see these images.

With *Rolling Stone* embarking on its 1,000<sup>th</sup> cover and forty years of covering the music industry, it has created an empire all its own. *Rolling Stone* has constructed itself into a cultural icon that covers our American culture. Jann S. Wenner said, "We have evolved and transitioned well with a lot of cultural changes and that's great because that is what we do. We do cover culture, and we are attuned to that so it keeps us young. It keeps us on the forward edge" (O'Brien, 2005, p. 1). With *Rolling Stone*'s forward edge, it will gather no moss.

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